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SONG OF A FALLING WORLD

Culture during the Break-up of the Roman Empire
(A.D. 350–600)

by

Jack Lindsay

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Note. All versions are line for line with the originals. Generally speaking, iambic verses are done into iambics, trochaic into trochees. Hexameters, which cannot be effectively imitated in our stress-metric, I do into the five-beat iambic line, which is our most flexible verse. Elegiacs (hexameter followed by pentameter) I usually give in quatrain form, since the ABAB-rhyming quatrain gives something of the effect of an expanding out-movement followed by a falling in-movement.

For the interest of the curious, here is an example of the elegiac couplet (by W. Watson) imitated in what T. F. Higham calls true-timed accentual (but not quantitative) verses

> Miser, whose coffered recesses the spoils of eternity cumber.
> Spendthrift foaming thy soul wildly in fury away.

Such a metrical form soon becomes hopelessly monotonous in English

I wish to mention here a special debt to Sir Stephen Gazelee, who never showed any signs of weariness, no matter how trivial the detail about which I sought his aid, to F. J E Raby, Manitius, Roger, P S Allen, and, in the more general matters, to S *Dill*, T R Glover, O M Dalton, F. Lot, Pirenne, E Meyer, Rostovtzeff, Vinogradoff And to John Morris for his many suggestions

1

INTRODUCTION

1. *The Theme.* The decline and fall of the Roman Empire is a subject of particular interest because it is the one example we have in the full light of history of the collapse of a civilisation. What happened to culture in that period of breakdown and renewal is therefore of especial importance for all inquiries into the nature and function of culture. Here is an extraordinary chance to work out the subtle relations of the social sphere (the politico-economic) and the cultural, to see how one links with the other and interacts with it, to investigate how far one is autonomous and how far it is bound up with the other, and to discover the pattern of the connection.

Broadly speaking, the relation is obvious enough. As the Empire goes down, culture goes down with it, until we reach the darkness and confusion of the seventh to eighth centuries. But once we have made that broad statement its inadequacy is manifest. The pattern is never one of simple equivalences. The social movement, to begin with, is itself highly complicated; it cannot be reduced to the clear graph of a sinking line with passing upward turns. The sinking line is there, it is true, with passing checks and recoveries; but there is also a continual influx of local forces which do more than hold up any steady decline and chequer the general groundwork. These forces often hold in solution various potencies, which bring a new quality into the pattern. The economic decline, for instance, may be tangled up with the release of new elements of self-government in daily affairs; and though this release may make no apparent difference to the general picture, yet it is bringing all sorts of new possibilities into the situation and can be traced out as playing an essential part in creating new bases of organisation.

In the same way the cultural pattern is never one of simple

decline with temporary rallying-points That pattern is there, and must be recognised But we falsify the whole process unless we see the inflow of new potentialities, some of which get nowhere, some of which are of the utmost importance for the future. Momentary integrations continually occur, which, though (broadly speaking) on a lower level than, say, those of the Augustan period, yet implicate forces of transformation of a wholly new colour and direction. So, to put the matter crudely, in some ways the plain and rough hymns of S Ambrose are as important for the future as the large scale and delicate ordonnance of the epic of Vergil

There then lies the interest of the voyage of discovery which this book makes We shall not expect to find any highly finished works of art on the Vergilian level, but we uncompromisingly deny the kind of picture which classical scholars, at least until recently, have given of the period as simply one of decline from the Vergilian standards (Thus, the editor of a survey of Latin literature, *The Mind of Rome*, published by the Clarendon Press in 1926 for the guidance of the general reader, states "Latin literature lingered on, gradually declining, but with an occasional flicker . . till it was merged in the Middle Ages But the student who has followed it up to Tacitus will have made the acquaintance of all that is worth knowing") The excitement of our voyage lies in finding the ways in which the continual effort of reintegration went on the thrust of local forces into the general arena, the gradual emergence of a new sort of man and a new sort of culture out of the ruins of the old. We shall not be surprised to find that at the very moments when the whole structure of the *Imperium Romanum* was breaking up, poetry was adventuring into new areas of life and experience, tentatively roughing out the forms of the future

In somewhat the same way Dr F. Schulz points out that hitherto scholars have judged the jurists of the fourth and fifth centuries as showing a degeneracy both in Latin and in law But this is to judge them unscientifically from the angle of classical jurisprudence Such an attitude "creditable to Romanistic scholars as classicists was discreditable to them as serious historians Roman legal science did not die with the Principate, but took on new forms suitable to contemporary conditions its

adaptability shows its vitality."[1] And Kitzinger says of the art of the third and fourth centuries A D that

these works can be described in other than purely negative terms, if judged by the standards, not of the classical age which lies behind them but of the medieval period which comes after them and which they in fact foreshadow The very features which from the classical point of view appear as shortcomings acquire a new and positive value when seen in the light of the development which was to follow

Thus even the earliest Christian works are not merely instances of the survival of the classical features They also serve to illustrate that other aspect of our transition period which makes it important from the point of view of medieval art namely the transformation of classical style into a transcendental, abstract style[2]

2 *The Roman Empire* Out of the breakdown of the Roman Empire came Europe But to grasp how that happened we must know something of the developments out of which the Empire itself came Behind Rome lay the Greek creation of city-democracy (on a slave basis) and many experiments of federation and association leading to the imperial unification of Alexander the Great Behind Greece lay a long series of city states and imperial states in the Near East and Egypt, which, politically, economically and culturally made the Graeco-Roman world possible But between Graeco-Roman society and the previous societies there was set a deep gulf The active concept of freedom was born with the Greeks, both in its political and spiritual relations and it was linked in the last resort with the great new economic mobility which the advent of a money economy in Greek hands brought about The primary elements of a monetary system went well back into the second millennium B C, but it was the Greeks who developed coinage, with a consequently intense advance in economic fluidity The continuous intellectual movement of the Greeks in the eighth to fourth centuries B C was bound up with the continuous social upheaval generated by money circulation

A few broad generalisations about ancient society should perhaps be made here From the invention of agriculture and the first urban groupings in the Near East, up to the development of large-scale industrial commodity production in modern Europe, the primary source of wealth was the Land But into the agricultural basis there persistently drove a mercantile impact, which

organisation, of mercantile contacts and war expansion, would arise in Italy—the area in the most potent relation simultaneously to the rich East and the vigorous West with its growing markets. And Rome, the point at the ford on the Tiber where traffic between north and south Italy crossed, was in many ways the town most favourably sited for gaining the hegemony of Italy and then of the whole Mediterranean.

The Roman State developed on a mercantile basis, with the usual expropriation of the peasantry as capital accumulated in the hands of the merchant class—to whom were added the financiers managing the taxes of conquered areas. The big landowners turned to capitalist farming and to large ranching estates. A violent internal struggle went on, which came to a head at the time of Caesar. The dispossessed farmers (many of whom had become legionaries) and the middle classes who wanted enlarged opportunities for money-making fought the narrowed ruling class, and won. The Republic was broken. There was widespread proscription and sharing out of land and property; and the stage was set for a general middle-class expansion all over the Empire. The economic token of this expanded stabilisation was the creation of a gold standard by Caesar.

Augustus provided the constitutional and legal basis for the new imperial State. As much liberty as was possible within the given framework was allowed to the municipalities and their middle class. The opening-up of new areas for exploitation and the creation of towns was an essential part of the polity. But State power remained concentrated at Rome, in the hands of an emperor whose household became the State bureaucracy. The idea of an elected body ruling more than a local area never took root.

There was thus a deep gap between the State form and the life of the municipalities, which did not show itself during the first period, that of expansion. The peace which the Empire brought to the Mediterranean area made possible all kinds of trade-knitting and even (within definite limits) industrial advances. The gap, however, was visible in the lack of any real contact between the State—the "Roman" element—and the productive activities. Italian merchants had been an important class at the time of Caesar, prominent from Gaul to Syria; but they came

from South Italy, a Graecised area, not from Rome Under the Empire even this class largely faded out Traffic fell almost wholly into the hands of Levantines, and Romans had nothing to do with navigation Crews were made up of Greeks, Illyrians, Egyptians Usury was the great industry of Rome [3]

The prosperity of Rome in the first century of the Empire was to a considerable extent based on the plunder drawn from the eastern half of the Mediterranean [4] The convulsions which saw the overthrow of Nero were the expression of the crisis when the plunder-stores gave out Nero's destroyer, Vespasian, carried out the second revolutionary phase of the imperial State [5] "The senatorial and equestrian orders [the landed upper class and financial upper middle class] were as if annihilated through political persecutions, but also because of the dissipation of fortunes Vespasian was obliged to create a new nobility out of provincial families "[6] The productive sections of the middle class were enabled to complete such expansion as the situation permitted and then the whole Empire began to contract.

The first two centuries of the Empire saw a rapid extension of urban ways of life and the provision of considerable public facilities Then the regressive movement began To keep on with the forward movement would have meant to break through the barriers which slavery set up, and to reverse the tendency of wealth to collect in a few hands To break slavery or control the movements of money were alike impossible, and so the Graeco Roman civilisation went down to disaster

But from the outset certain contrary movements of equalisation had begun By the third century A D, in the midst of accumulating troubles, the Emperor Caracalla granted the full franchise to all free citizens And as part of the turmoils and changes of the revolutionary period of Caesar Christianity had been born as a protest movement of the dispossessed masses of the East, who had been deeply disappointed by the failure of the Empire to bring about freedom and plenty as well as peace It fused the messianic hopes of the Jews, who looked to national liberation from the imperial oppressors, and the mystery aspirations of the semi urbanised peoples, who turned to the emperors as to saviour gods but found no lasting satisfaction in the State cults As it grew, its dissident elements took on a sharper

opposition to the State, to existing society in all its forms; and into it flowed all the powerful mass yearning for harmony, the frustrated desire for unity. State and dissident mystery religion clashed, till in the process (bound up in turn with the whole social, economic and cultural movement of discord and integration under the Empire) both State and mystery religion were modified and ended in an effort of fusion.

3. *Breakdown.* In the early Empire industry expanded, but underwent no basic changes.[7] Its forms were enlarged, but no new forms were devised. Workshops in some cases employed many hands, but no movement towards new processes or the integration of existing processes appeared. Money did not flow into industry, but into usury and land. The demand for luxuries meant that much bullion went out of the Empire into the further East. The one invention which had come out of the Hellenistic period, adapted to labour process, the water-mill, was never much used—though the fact that it was handed on to medieval Europe was of the greatest importance.[8]

Hence the way in which slavery acted as a down-drag on the system. Most leading authorities are agreed on this point. But to understand why men could not realise the vicious circle in which their social energies were expending themselves, why the many inventions of the Hellenistic age were never industrially applied, why the monetary expansion which released such vast forces was fated to end by crippling and distorting everything, without any effort being made to get outside it and understand its operation—those are questions we can answer only when we grasp the living whole of history. Only then can we see how men's most free quests and most comprehensive perceptions are bound up with the society in which they live—which means the effective relations to Nature which the society as a whole has set up. Men can never get outside that historical whole, because to do so would mean getting outside humanity—death. Within that whole, freedom and necessity, choice and compulsion, realisation and blindness, creativeness and frustration are linked together; ultimately they are facets of a single reality, and one conditions the other. Not in a static way, not in any mechanical equivalence, but in the dynamic, forever-changing organic way

of real life, where a ceaseless transformation goes on at the heart of things The historical whole operates in an hypnotic way, preventing men from fully grasping problems outside the range of its possibilities—though that range can be a very complicated matter, involving remote potentialities as well as immediate applications But all the while the central pressures do operate [8]

As the economic structure lost its energy, a caste system settled down on the Empire Men were tied down to their forms of work or social status, and their sons had to follow in their footsteps Municipal self-government lost all vitality, and became merely the method whereby the imperial State imposed its will and collected its taxes Councillors were kept functioning only by severe penalties The financial system clogged and went down wards In the third century only Caracalla's antoninianus remained in circulation and soon it was only a piece of lead or copper covered with a thin skin of silver—a metal *assignat*, in Mommsen's phrase A partial recovery was managed by Diocletian and Constantine [9]

The third century saw a weakening of the urban way of life Cities shrank [10] Thus, after A.D 275 Autun in France contracted from some 500 acres to less than 25 almost all the other Gallic towns had come down to less than 60 Buildings fell into dis repair Diocletian made a desperate effort to fix maximum prices and to break food rings, but the State could not enforce such a system The Army had to be paid and the civil service maintained and all attempts to reorganise increased the social rigidity and still further flattened things out The peasantry were turned into serfs The worse things got and the less able the towns were to pay taxes, the greater grew the exactions and the heavier the weight of the bureaucratic machine The status of the *curiales*, the middle class of the towns who had to collect taxes, was made inescapable, but the *senatoriales*, the large landlords were exempted from municipal taxes and had to pay only a few imposts [11] Magistracies were thus a sad burden, the guilds of craftsmen and traders turned into caste organisations under State supervision.

The imperial State tried to control economic and social life increasingly as vitality was dying out of that life There was no counter principle of democratic control in action With the third

century the Army became the one source of power; and anarchy broke out, with rival claimants to the seat of empire.[12] In the fourth century order was re-established, but at the cost of all resilience in the social structure. The failure of the State was shown in the triumph of Christianity. Diocletian, who made the last great effort of reorganisation, fought both the Christians and the profiteers; and failed. The cracking-up State had to compromise with the Christians in order to gain any real cementing idiom.

It is instructive to read the Edict in which Diocletian attempted price-fixing. It is a strange, furious confession of governmental impotence, a statement of desperate compassion, a demand for a social conscience which it can find no way of stimulating. It wants a better life for the common people, but has no plan except a restrictive one; in order to stop things from getting worse, it can only strive desperately to fix in perpetual rigidity an existing set of relations.

> If some sense of moderation cannot check the raging avarice which without concern for mankind increases and grows by leaps and bounds—we will not say from year to year, month to month, or day to day, but almost from hour to hour and even from minute to minute—if our regard for the people's welfare could tolerate unmoved this mad licence from which in such a situation the people suffer in the worst possible fashion from day to day, some ground perhaps would be found for concealing the truth and saying nothing
>
> But inasmuch as there is seen only a mad lust without controlling principle or consideration of the general needs, we who are the fathers of the people have decided to consider the future, so that justice may intervene with impartial arbitration and so that the long desired condition which humanity could not bring about unaided may be secured for the common government of all by the remedies which the case affords
>
> Who is so hardened of heart, so untouched by a sense of humanity, that he can be unaware—nay, that he has not had it forced on him—how in the sales of wares which are exchanged in the markets or dealt with in the daily business of cities, an exorbitant tendency in prices has spread to such an extent that unbridled lust for extortion is held in check neither by an abundance nor by seasons of plenty?

Lactantius (a Christian and therefore an enemy of Diocletian) records the results of the Edict. "For the veriest trifles much blood was shed, and out of fear nothing was offered for sale, and the scarcity grew much worse, until after the deaths of many

persons the law was repealed from mere necessity." The powerlessness of the emperors before the market mechanism is shown further by the attempt which Julian, the last pagan Emperor, made some sixty years later to control prices at Antioch The dealers hoarded Julian brought corn from Egypt Speculators cornered it, and Julian had to give up

The emperor in these years was in an odd position of isolation. He could not turn on the landed aristocracy without a further revolution which would have involved the abolition of slavery; yet the aristocracy defeated and hampered the imperial administration at all points The emperor therefore, in his struggles to maintain power and administrative control, was forced into much sympathy with the suffering masses, but could not effectively express it "Amid all the perverse errors of legislation and the hopeless corruption of the financial service," says Dill, "the candid reader of the [Theodosian] Code cannot help feeling that the central authority was keenly alive to its duties and almost overwhelmed by its responsibilities" He notes the paradox "It is impossible to ignore the high sense of duty, and the almost effusive sympathy for the suffering masses, which mark the last utterances of the imperial jurisprudence Just as paganism on the eve of its proscription by the State attained for a moment an elevation and purity higher than it ever attained in the ages of its unchallenged supremacy, so the imperial government was probably never so anxious to check abuses, or so compassionate for the desolate and suffering, as in the years when its forces were being paralysed "[13]

It is against this background that we must view the triumph of Christianity. In a sense, the impotent legislative attempts of the government to champion the dispossessed masses prefigure the union of the government and the religion which most strongly uttered the needs and aspirations of those masses But the long process which had changed the State of Augustus into that of Theodosius had also changed the religion in which the mass protest against the Empire's insufficiencies had been consolidated Both the Roman State and the Christian religion involved in their idiom ideas and desires of justice and brotherhood which there seemed no earthly basis for realising Those elements persisted, stirring continual new efforts of integration within the

given situation of political and productive activity; and in this way they carried enormous potentialities for the future. In fact, they carried Europe in their womb. But meanwhile, in a hopeless world, they could express themselves only in aspiration and very partial or distorted actualisations of unity. From different angles, their wishes for harmony, for justice and brotherhood, met in a common segment of hope and despair, of action and inaction, of compromise. That was why Constantine's Edict of Milan (A.D. 313), recognising Christianity, was an essential step in preserving the whole Graeco-Roman heritage and making Europe possible. The forcible suppression of paganism was a necessary part of the process.

Christianity spoke from the heart of the mass-needs, but its victory depended on profound changes in the State, in the needs of the State. Probably Christians at the time did not make up anything like a twentieth of the population. Bury says of the Edict of Milan, "a revolution defiant of the wishes of the vast majority has never in the world's history been accomplished on so large a scale." That is partly true. Christianity was imposed by an act of political dictatorship. And yet something of the sort had to happen if total collapse was to be avoided. Christianity beat Mithraism or sun-worship because it came closest to a revolutionary movement. Mumford well says, "From Paul to Augustine, doctrinal Christianity was essentially the product of an informal revolutionary committee of correspondence." Christianity won because it embodied the deepest mass aspirations towards freedom and yet (because of inner contradictions) was the best instrument for organising a society in decay. Because it most thoroughly rejected all existing forms of social organisation, it could best be used to support forms of absolutism, and yet, in doing so, it preserved most powerfully the idiom of free harmonious union Arguing against Celsus (iii, 7), Origen defended Christianity as politically desirable, since Christians were pledged not to revolt or resist the State in any way [14]

The Roman Imperial State, which had come into being under Augustus to express a compromise between the mercantile and landed interests, had been gradually squeezed away from a living social basis, and had become rootlessly bureaucratic. As the mercantile and industrial element weakened, the compromise

would not work The landed classes, increasingly baronial, got more and more power, the failing cities came more and more under their domination The humanitarian aspects of the emperors' policy represent a hopeless effort to bring life back to the middle classes of the city But the equalitarian pressures of the mercantile expansion finally broke down tribal and local differences within the Empire, only as all vitality was going out of trade Hence the odd way in which the law moved towards greater humanity at the same time as the economic failure was throwing up new rigidities of social division This fusion of contrary movements was basic in all ancient society, but only in the Roman Empire, with the full extension of the *oikoumene*, did it reach its culmination We must grasp that if we are to understand the tensions, the irreconcilable conflicts and the sense of vast potential harmonies, which govern men's minds and lives in such a world

The paradox of development under the Empire is again to be seen in the matter of slavery "Slavery" is a very confused term we must remember that in history it covers all sorts of servitudes —from simple patriarchal slavery to the serfdom imposed on village commune, from menial domestic toil to the work of a skilled artisan who has considerable personal independence The slave craftsman is a product of the mercantile movement and appears in large numbers only at mercantile centres As the levelling pressures of the Empire gather force a generally servile status creeps over all the lower classes To a considerable extent the entanglement of mercantile levelling and economic collapse flattened distinctions of servile and free status and prepared the way for mediaeval society (*Servus* becomes *serf*, and when early mediaeval society wants a name for *slave* it takes the racial term of *Sclav*—since its slaves were largely imported from East Europe)

At the crucial point Constantine, son of a Roman officer and a country tavern wench, completed the change of the Emperor into an Oriental despot and set up his capital further east at Byzantium (Constantinople) He also made the tying-down of the *coloni*, the share farmers to the manor legally enforceable [15] The Emperor became the Orthodox and Apostolic living in a Sacred Palace with a Divine Household issuing Celestial Commands, and the Tax Assessment was now the Divine Delegation

The elevation of Christianity was a necessary part of this assumption of absolutism [16]

The weakening of the Empire in the fourth century showed itself in the barbarian invasions The barbarians had long been infiltrating into the Empire, but as mercenaries for the legions, the process of Romanisation had already gone a fair way before the invasions began Now the Empire proved too weak to hold the frontiers and to assimilate intruding groups Goths, Vandals, Visigoths, Alans, Burgundians, Franks, and others pressed in over the borders They had no wish to destroy the Empire, they wanted to share in its good things and to serve it If they plundered, it was because that was the easiest way to get a share Even under the extreme blows of their harrying movements for generations the imperial structure maintained itself substantially intact It shrank as the economic network shrank, but as in some ways the invasions were economically beneficial, the war shocks were by no means simply destructive "There was only one novelty," says Pirenne "service in the Army was gratuitous, thanks to the distribution of land The State was relieved of the terrible war budget which had formerly crushed the people The administration, which had become somewhat more rudimentary, was also less costly The Church saw to everything else "[17] He is writing of Gaul, but his remarks have a general relevance to the whole empire

But before we go on to consider the poetry of the period, I want to deal with certain aspects of Graeco Roman education and culture which it is necessary to understand

4 *Education* Under the Empire there were two grades of school [18] On the one hand were the village schools, which at times merged into colleges Here the rudiments were taught, under rather forbidding conditions Ausonius, in a poem of good advice to his grandson, tries to prepare the small boy for the coming terrors he begs him not to dread the master—"though the school echoes with the thud of thwacks and your aged master wears a truculent frown " The normal background is "the sound of swishing rods " The boy is not to shrink from the displayed cane, birch and tawse, since they are "the pomp and painted show of the place " The final consolation is in true English

public-school form "Your father and your mother in their day went through it all" You too will be a man some day, and, I trust, a great one S Augustine also testifies to the boy's terror of school, he tells how he used to pray God to let him escape a thrashing "And when thou heardst me not, my elders, yea, my very parents who yet wished me no ill, mocked my stripes my then great and grievous ill"

On the other hand were the grammar schools run by the municipalities In the weakening Empire the problem of salaries became acute, and with Constantine the emperors begin to legislate on the subject the central government tried to take control Some positions were filled direct by the State others by the local councillors [19]

Grammar and rhetoric were the subjects of study The first school of rhetoric had been opened at Rome in 92 B C, and promptly closed by the Censors as against tradition But Greek tutors had long been employed in the rich families, and their system could not be kept out Philosophy and geometry were suspect as abstract or banausic Grammar was accepted as giving the elements rhetoric as giving the application of culture Grammar was founded on the close study of an author, rhetoric on the use of the disclosed methods for persuasion in the law courts or the political arena This attitude was derived from the days of the Republic with its strenuous political struggles but it continued throughout the Empire, when all free political struggle had faded out, and the orator left the forum for the lecture hall Martianus Capella writes about education as if he still lived in the days of Cicero [20]

Rhetoric continued to deal with figures of speech the divisions of discourse, varieties of style for different purposes prosody of sentence, management of voice and gesture, and the like Debates were carried on on set subjects and much ingenuity was expended in finding fresh difficult themes The themes were divided into *suasoria* and *controversia*—fictitious deliberative speeches and fictitious court speeches Examples are Alexander debates whether to cross the ocean Cicero debates whether he should burn his MSS on Antony s promise of safety for doing so, Thetis grieves over the body of Achilles In *controversia* the declaimer would speak against a man who put a statue of Minerva in an ill omened

place, or against a man who, after refusing to ransom his son from pirates, comes later to ask aid for him [21]

The themes grew progressively less related to any of the real problems environing men Already in the earlier Empire Petronius attacked the system as leading to a dislocation of culture and life, but without effect Men clung to the system of rhetoric as to their one hope of expression and vindication The appreciation of it was identified with civilisation In applauding the accomplished rhetorician, men felt that they proved their birthright, their difference from the world that knew not Roman virtue and its civilising energies "If we lose eloquence," Libanius said, "what remains to distinguish us from the Barbarians?" And this high estimation of rhetoric seemed almost to grow in proportion to its separation from all the realities of life. "Never has eloquence been so prized," says Lot, "as at the very moment when it corresponded to nothing, since all liberty has vanished" [22] To be able to speak with equal effect on both sides of a question was to have reached the heights of culture

There is a consensus of opinion among historians that rhetoric was wholly disastrous in its effects [23] "It made progress impossible," says Dill "The pseudo-humanist education," says Lot, "is the profound cause of the evil" Without doubt, it subjected to a ready-made method the diverse material of life and in the process crushed much if not all the life out Because there were no productive and scientific advances, the ready-made effort held undisputed sway and became ever more rigid, abstract, mechanical But the matter is too complex to be covered by a simple denunciation Rhetoric was the conscious organising procedure of practically all Graeco-Roman expression, and we must recognise its strengths as well as its weaknesses

It arrived with the full impact of Greek science and philosophy on the general area of Greek culture It was the method by which the Sophists tried to sort out the new possibilities and paradoxes begotten by the scientific discoveries and their philosophic hypotheses It represented a crisis of logic, it pried out all the difficulties which logic of the deductive and inductive sort, finally given form by Aristotle, could not meet It was therefore on the one side closely entangled with practical life, with politics and the law and the arguments in the city square on citizenship

public school form "Your father and your mother in their day went through it all" You too will be a man some day, and, I trust, a great one S Augustine also testifies to the boy's terror of school, he tells how he used to pray God to let him escape a thrashing "And when thou heardst me not, my elders, yea, my very parents, who yet wished me no ill, mocked my stripes, my then great and grievous ill"

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his society to see how the rhetorical system controlled the minds of men. His protests are so important, though untypical, that they need to be cited at length.

5. *Petronius.* The *Satyricon*, as we have it, opens abruptly with an argument about the Schools between Encolpius, the narrator, and Agamemnon, a professional teacher of rhetoric

Surely our teachers of rhetoric are agitated by a new brood of Furies when they bellow I received these wounds in the defence of the freedom of the people, I sacrificed this eye on the altar of your rights, lend me a guiding hand and lead me to my children, for I'm hamstrung and my knees crumple under me

Even this style would be tolerable if it opened up a path to oratory But as things are, the bombast of matter, the rattling vacancy of phrase, have the sole result that when the pupil ventures into the Forum he thinks he's dropped into a new world Yes, I consider our youths are taught only to make themselves brainless foolers, for the good reason they never deal with anything of everyday life For them the world's made up of pirates clanking with chains on the seashore, tyrants scribbling ukases to make sons chop off their father's heads, plague time oracles advocating the slitting of three (or more) virgins—sticky verbal suckets, every word and gesture well-sprinkled with poppy seed and sesame oil

Lads nourished on such stuff can no more keep a sense of balance than scullery wenches can smell sweet With your permission, I'll speak my mind You teachers were the first cause of rhetoric going to the dogs You've worked people up to expect certain frivolous effects of silly, tripping elocution, and that's why rhetoric is now a languishing body, drooping for the grave

Young men weren't held down to set speeches in the days when Sophocles and Euripides sought out the one and only word for their meaning No ivory towered pedant had worm eaten their brains in the days when Pindar and the Nine Lyrists didn't think it their job to copy the song of Homer

Not that I need quote the poets for testimony I don't see that Plato or Demosthenes ever set themselves down to this sort of training Great and, as I may say, decently-behaved rhetoric is neither florid nor flatulent It rises by compulsion of its own inborn grace But this blustering and formless fluency is a latter day immigrant to Athens out of Asia, and it has breathed its rankness over the minds of aspiring youth like the spell of a pestilential planet Then no sooner was the old tradition broken than eloquence stood stock still with paralytic tongue

To sum up, who thereafter rivalled the fame of Thucydides or Hyperides? Why, not a single poem with a healthy complexion has come to light All branches of expression, fed, it would seem on the same synthetic pap, grew palsied before they'd a chance to find grey hairs—and painting met the same fate as soon as Egyptian charlatanry compiled textbooks on that great craft

and morals, and on the other side it was merged with poetry, with the balances and conflicts and resolutions which lay deep in the content of poetry, and which found expression, not only in the larger architectonic aspects of form but also in the tensions of sentence and paragraph [24]

We grasp something of the complex relation of consciously involved rhetoric to a rebel logic if we look at Gorgias, the Greek sophist of the fifth century B C, whom Aristotle picks out as the creator of poetical prose style Gorgias's style was made up of antitheses, sound jingles (end-rhymes or assonances), and careful symmetry of parts, of metaphors, repetitions, apostrophes and circumlocutions [25] The content of his thought appears in his work, *On Nature, or On that which Is Not* Here he argues that things neither are nor are not, as otherwise being and not-being would be identical, that if there were existence, it could neither have come to be or not come to be, and neither be one or many, that if there is a real existence it is beyond human power to know it, and that if it can be known, it cannot be communicated [26] All these arguments, based in the self-contradictions contained in language, reveal the new faculty of minute differentiation and combination of ideas, which grasps at problems insoluble by a mechanical logic They therefore simultaneously reveal an impasse and the possibility of integration on a higher level, an utter futility and an intuitive grasp of new potentials

In the working-out of history in the ancient world, in the full pattern of defeats and advances, rhetoric plays this dual part At times it records a desiccated frustration at others, a new grappling with the material of experience The advances could agitate the whole system of ancient thought, but could not break through to any essentially new organising centre In the agitation however, rhetoric assumed a fresh life its forms were submerged in the material In Latin culture the great triumph appears in the work of Vergil, where the rhetorical discipline is most integratively used, and in the work of Catullus, where a strong lyrical impulse thrives on the verge before it moves deeper in and is swallowed up [27]

At no points could the ancients escape the problems set for them by rhetoric. Petronius the great lyrical realist, is perhaps the only man who was able to detach himself sufficiently from

his society to see how the rhetorical system controlled the minds of men. His protests are so important, though untypical, that they need to be cited at length.

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"Then what is there to be surprised in the decadence of painting when all gods and men alike think an ingot of gold far more beautiful than anything those crazed, poor Greeks, Apelles and Pheidias, ever made"

Petronius thus makes a complex charge He blames the system of rhetoric which has ceased to be a living discipline; he blames people in general for maintaining this system through a desire to have their sons making a way in the world without concern for civilised values, and he blames on a comprehensive historical view the money values which have destroyed any capacity for whole-hearted devotion to the ends of science and art

Perhaps if we had the works of the violent plebeian orator and satirist, Cassius Severus, whom Augustus banished for his outspokenness, we might find a valuation of rhetoric to set beside that of Petronius For Seneca in *Contraversia* (iii) cites him as saying that in such a system "I seem to be toiling in dreams" As things are, we must turn to Tacitus, who in his *Dialogue on Orators* made the next most comprehensive examination He attacked modern parents for leaving the education of their children to supervising servants, he examined changes in the system of apprenticeship for public speaking and criticised the schools, he finally explained the general decline as the result of the political system of the Empire The turbulence of the class struggle in Republican days had ended instead, there reigned "the long peace of the times and continual quiet of the people and steady tranquillity of the senate and above all the rule of the prince . . ." Tacitus, though unable to compass the broad and penetrative outlook of Petronius, does add one basic political point the loss of any direct platform for democratic action It is characteristic that a generation later the author of the tract on the sublime (? Longinus) rejects Tacitus's political thesis and decides that the root cause of the decline is to be found not in despotism, but in the increase of private vices, greed and self indulgence

Two pagan criticisms of the second century are worth adding to that of Petronius Aulus Gellius noted that the Latin *humanitas*,

which ought to mean the same as the Greek *philanthropia*, did in fact mean the same as the Greek *paideia*. Instead of covering the emotions that united, it referred to the higher education which cut a man off from his less-favoured fellows. But Gellius was not capable of pursuing the full consequences of this philological point. Nearer at first glance to the full Petronian position is the plaint of Vettius Valens of Antiochus, an astrologer, who asks why he did not have the luck to live in the spacious days of the enthusiasts of old, breathing "the fresh air of their spiritual freedom for research." He goes on: "Nowadays the effective investigation of facts is obscured and blighted by fear. The intellect, driven into negation and no longer fortified by ratiocination, has lost its stability. It has become inconsequently volatile to a degree at which it threatens to resume its primeval unconsciousness" (*lethe*). This is an extraordinary statement; but the drift from the Petronian defence of scientific inquiry is shown by the fact that it is in the name of astrology alone that he laments the death of Greek science.[28]

The secular challenge to the system of rhetoric—or rather, to its debased forms—was dying out. It remained for the Christians to take up the challenge from a new angle.

6. *The Development of Rhetoric.* Ordinary cultured people did not feel any very strong problem. For the most part, if they were aware of a conflict, it was between various stylistic trends within the accepted rhetorical tradition; and this conflict normally took the form of the Atticising schools against the Asianic. The Atticisers wanted more restraint, simplicity; a closer relation between style and the rhythms and diction of ordinary speech; the Asianic went out for the full antithetical virtuosity, with all possible ornament. In the last days of the Roman Republic it was a group of young radicals led by Calvus, the friend of Catullus, who atticised; while Cicero, the careerist, sought to combine both Attic and Asianic schools.[29]

But, underlying the terms in which men stated the conflict within rhetoric, were the fuller tensions which in the last resort implicate the whole basis of Graeco-Roman life, but which in a more limited way are bound up with the movement of ancient science. They embodied the tangle of quarrelling elements within that

Thus Petronius, by the mouth of Encolpius, makes his charge that culture has lost all touch with life and has become a mere exercise of copying models no longer relevant to the needs of the situation His plea is for originality, courage, a return to life and a discipline born of actual social needs and problems Agamemnon replies to the charges by accusing the man-in-the-street, the ordinary citizen, who wants his children educated in the forcing artificial way:

Agamemnon would not let me stand there speechifying in the portico longer than he had sweated in the schools "Young fellow," he said, "your conversation has an original touch about it, and, what is more unusual still, you cherish good taste So I won't beguile you by talking about the secrets of my art. The truth is that the teachers aren't to blame for these practices They are in a mad house and they must rave to be understood Unless they catch the fancy of the students, as Cicero says, they have benches for audience.

"Like the parasites in the plays who go cadging after the dinners of the rich, they consider first what is likely to gratify their listeners They'll never get what they're after unless they lay snares for the ear It's the same with a rhetoric teacher Unless he's a fisherman who can skewer on his hook the bait to lure the sprats, he'll squat on his rock without a ha'penny in his creel

"Then what's the remedy? Parents are the people to be reproved for refusing to let their children gain the advantage of a strict course of study They at once devote their hopes like everything else to a career They're so anxious to get their prayers fulfilled that they drive the crammed schoolboy into the courts and force the robe of oratory, which they themselves are the first to call our greatest glory, on to unweaned lads

"If they'd only allow work to progress systematically—so the earnest students might freshen their wits with steady reading, give their minds ballast with wisdom's aphorisms, dig out their technique with a sharp-edged point, listen long before they started copying, and convince themselves that what pleases boys can't be true grandeur—then the fine old style would return with its full weight of dignity. But nowadays boys play about at school, lads make fools of themselves in the Forum, and, what is a worse shame, no one admits in his old age the fallacies with which he was doped as a student.

"And as I wouldn't like you to think I scorn the modest verses that Lucilius used to throw off, I'll give you my own views on the subject compressed into metre

"He that woos rigorous art and hopes to win
a greatness for his striving name must try
frugality's sharp-scouring discipline
and pass proud mansions bragging to the sky

"He must not cringe when food is his desire,
nor with low friends and drunken orgies quench
his spirit's flame, nor let bad actors hire
his venal handclaps from the deadheads' bench

"Whether Minerva's fortress blessed his youth,
the Siren's Home, or Spartan colony,
first he must muse on verse in earnest truth,
quaff deep the springs of Homer's poetry,
throw loose his reins with the Socratic pack
and swing Demosthenes' two-handed blade—
then, to the Roman writers welcomed back,
imbibe new life with their redeeming aid.

"Let the Courts squabble, he has passed along
In quiet he will harness champing song
mid feasts and wars that clang triumphantly
while Cicero's tall words of glory sound
Gird up your mind for this nobility,
and free and strong your utterance will be found"

But neither the restless-witted satirical Encolpius nor the slightly pompous Agamemnon give the whole of Petronius's view of contemporary culture. We must complete their remarks by the criticism made later by the philosophic Eumolpus, whom Encolpius meets in an art gallery. Encolpius asks his opinion on the failure of the fine arts and the decadence of painting in particular.

"Greed for money began this revolution," he replied. "In earlier times, when naked virtue had her charms, the freeborn arts flourished There was the most ardent struggle among men to ensure that nothing was long undiscovered which could benefit posterity

"Thus, Democritus extracted the juices of all earth's plants, and spent his whole life in experimentally finding out the virtues of stones and shoots Eudoxus turned grey on a mountain-crest to trace the movements of stars and the sky, and Chrysippus three times swabbed out his wits with hellebore to improve his powers of invention

"Turn to sculptors and you find *Lysippus*, who dies of *starvation through* concentrating on the form of a single statue, and Myron, who almost caught the very souls of men and beasts in bronze, yet left no heirs

"But we are sunk in wine and whores, and cannot rise to understand even the arts already developed We abuse the past, and teach and learn nothing but vices Where is dialectic now? Where is astronomy? Where is the subtly-devised way of wisdom? Who has ever been to a temple with an offering to gain him eloquence or a draught of the spring of philosophy? Men do not

ask even for good sense or health, but before they touch the threshold of the Capitol, one promises an offering if he buries his well-off neighbour, another if he digs up buried treasure another if he safely makes thirty million. Even the Senate the inculcators of what is right and good often promise a thousand pounds in gold to the Capitol and adorn God Himself with cash, so that no one need blush at a prayer for money

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But, underlying the terms in which men stated the conflict within rhetoric, were the fuller tensions which in the last resort implicate the whole basis of Graeco-Roman life, but which in a more limited way are bound up with the movement of ancient science They embodied the tangle of quarrelling elements within that

movement, from which came equally the sophistic paradox and the Aristotelian logic Thus when Norden says that rhetoric destroyed Greek poetry, I should rephrase his meaning as follows the contradictions within Greek culture, the creation of a scientific attitude without a proper development of scientific methodology, ended by leaving the formal elements of thought high and dry, and these formal elements became the end as well as the means of expression [30] That way lay a barren complication of technique without creative resolution. After Theocritus in the third century B C, no living Greek poetry, apart from the minor elaborations of the epigram, was written until the needs of the mystery cults and Christianity broke through into the upper levels of culture [31]

"Classical Latin poetry begins and ends in dependence on rhetoric," said Raby [32] That is to say, Latin culture was dependent on Greek and took over what it could of the Greek scientific outlook The Romans made no basic scientific advances, but they fathered great engineering works They did not merely take up Greek culture at its failing level, in many ways they realised it anew, though with considerable losses and certain gains Raby states clearly the way in which the rhetorical discipline entered into the heart of Latin verse-constructions Whereas in Vergil the rhetorical basis is finely fused with the needs of emotional expression—

> *Tibullus and Propertius show the beginnings of the invasion of rhetoric* (into the elegiac couplet) the hexameter and pentameter always tend to form a closed couplet, and the pentameter does not always serve to advance the sense of the hexameter Instead it repeats or embroiders on the idea already expressed or provides an antithesis It was Ovid who saw the possibilities of such a treatment of the elegiac measure which was suggested by the short parallel or antithetic members of the rhetorical prose It seemed obvious that poetry would gain by imitating the much-admired features of the Asiatic style Ovid won much fame in the schools as a declaimer and he studied under the professors of the new style [33]

That is, after Vergil the contradictions wear through the mechanics of rhetorical control tend to press themselves on the attention Then it is in the delicate ringing of changes on the given mechanism that artistic satisfactions are found Votienus Montanus declares that the rhetorician leaves "arguments which are bothersome and give a very slight chance of ornamentation" He 'desires to gain approval, not for the case but for himself' [34]

The Christian thinkers at first denounced rhetoric. Tertullian attacked the schools as being impregnated with idolatry.[25] His voice, which appeals for a culture that will reach the common man, will be heard again in full strength when the monastics arise in indignation and denunciation in the fifth century. He cries:

> Stand forth, O soul. I appeal to you, not as wise with a wisdom formed in the Schools, trained in Libraries, or nourished in Attic Academy or Portico, but as simple and rude, without polish or culture; such as you are to those who have you only, such as you are in the crossroad, the highway, the dockyard.

And he contrasts:

> one, the servant of God, the other, of the Greeks: one, a man of words, the other of acts, one working at building, the other at destruction: one putting in errors, the other putting together what is true.

Similarly, Origen states the basic opposition of cultural attitudes:

> We have to say, moreover, that the gospel has a demonstration of its own, more divine than any established by Greek Dialectics. And this diviner method is called by the apostle the Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power (*Cont. Cel.*, 1, 2)

The mechanism of rhetoric is set against the overwhelming intuition of a new union, for which a logic does not yet exist.

This conflict between the Christian outlook and the logic systems of pagan culture is a theme which will pervade our inquiry. Every now and then it flares out into open fury, and the Christian thinker stands firm against any compromise; but even in the very idiom of denunciation the continual ingress of rhetorical method into the Christian spheres is generally manifest. What happened was a slow and unsteady convergence, in which much was lost on both sides, but out of which came the basis for a new culture. Ambrose denounced. "Not in dialectic has it pleased God to give his people salvation," and yet his work, especially in verse, marks an important point of fusion between the new and old attitudes.

Jerome, the learned, declared against dialectic: "The Church of Christ is not made up from the Academy and the Lyceum, but from the basest dregs of the people (*de vili plebecula*)." Augustine, the subtle scholar, denigrates the schools. "But

perhaps someone will say, Even if he was humbly born, he wishes to make a boast of the nobility of his followers? He does not choose the kings or the senators or the philosophers or the orators Rather indeed he chooses the plebeian, the poor, the uneducated fishermen Peter was a fisherman, Cyprian an orator Unless the fisherman came first in faith, the orator would not humbly follow" Or, "He has not gained a fisherman from an orator, but an orator from a fisherman, he has gained from a fisherman a senator, he has gained from a fisherman an emperor" In *The City of God* he says that Christ sent a handful of men with the net of faith to the sea of this world, men who were unlearned in the liberal arts and their disciplines, rough men, unskilled in grammar and lacking the weapons of dialectic, and these men took many fish in their net, even took those rare creatures the philosophers themselves[18]

There will be noticed in the turn of Augustine's phrase a subtle modification The fisherman had to come first but his net was swung to catch the rhetoricians and philosophers, who then presumably add their talents to the Christian cause And if they do that, they have to use the disciplines of the liberal arts In compromising with society, the Church had to compromise with rhetoric Clement of Alexandria and Origen, in the East, began the attempt to relate Christian thought vitally with Greek philosophy, and in the West the problem of finding an effective fusion of Christian attitudes and secular culture came to a head in Augustine and Jerome

Augustine tells us how he struggled against his feeling that the Psalms were uncouth and barbarous even Ambrose's advice could not prevail on him to read Isaiah through he fell back on the argument that the Christian could ransack pagan literature because the Israelites took the golden vases of the Egyptians to consecrate them to the Lord. Jerome says that when he longed to read Cicero he used to fast "After a long night of watching after tears which the memory of my sons brought from my inmost being I would take up Plautus If ever I came to myself and began reading the Prophets, the crude language grated on me" It required an angel with a scourge, he says, to flagellate out his taste for the classics He cites in his own defence the case of the Hebrew taking for wife the captive woman who is

not of the true faith—though, he admits, the woman first had her head shaven and her nails cut[37] So, despite all revulsions and modifications, the system of rhetoric found its way into the culture of the Church and was handed on to the Middle Ages And necessarily so The struggle between the intuition of a living unity and the system of rhetoric was a struggle to revivify rhetoric, to throw it back on its original centres and to move into the future of a more comprehensive logic In Augustine the struggle entered its first great phase of resolution The way in which he used the rhetorical method to define and unite apparently irreconcilable positions—which had to be united if men were to integrate themselves and society at all—will be clearer when we come to look at his *City of God*

For while insisting on the continuity of the rhetorical tradition, we must recognise the modifications introduced by the continual counter-movement of Christian attitudes Augustine might blench at the Psalms, but the common folk who had made up the martyrs had died with them on their lips[38] "When other passages of Scripture," said Ambrose, "are used in church, the words are drowned in the noise of talking but when the psalter is read, all are dumb" They seem to have got into common street-song, work song "We praise God as we till our lands," said Clement of Alexandria, "we sing to him hymns as we are sailing" Theodore of Mopsuestia admits that the other Scriptures are mostly unknown, "but the psalms are repeated in private houses, in streets, and market-places, by those who have learned them by heart, and feel the soothing power of their divine melodies' Indeed from the letter written by the two ladies Paula and Eustochium, who had retired to Bethlehem, to their friend Marcella, we see how monastic labour and the Psalms mingled to provide a conviction of idyllic escape from the world's violent contradictions, a sort of utopian return to the Golden Age The country quiet, the ladies say, is broken only by the sound of the Psalms the ploughman leaning on the plough handle, the sweating reaper, the vine-dresser pruning the vines, all lighten their toil with the song of praise "The psalms are our poetry, our love songs, our pastorals, our instruments of husbandry' The Psalms thus represented a culture opposed to rhetoric, a culture of common labour and direct

expression[39] And it was out of a fusion of the psalm-level and the rhetoric level that the new culture came

7 *Regional Influences Africa* During this study we shall come continually up against the problem of regional developments, which force their way into the imperial level of culture and proceed to modify it—themselves being modified in the process The key province in many ways is North Africa, and we must now look with some detail at how things developed there during the period from the stabilisation of the Empire under Vespasian and the Flavian dynasty up to the date when we begin our examination round about A D 350

For it is in Africa that we see the imperial shell of culture first cracking and letting new forces through Those forces, after the first outburst of which Appuleius is the triumphant expression could not come to further fruition till the troubles of the third century died down and the new semi-caste system of the declining Empire had time to provide a certain stabilisation But we must have some notion of what they were and what they did, before we pick up the trail about 350

In the time of the Caesarian revolution it had been North Italy, still freshly a Celtic area, which provided the main stream of cultural energies which transformed the Republican culture into something subtler, richer, broader During the period of the Empire, in the post-Vespasian expansion and contraction, the main intellectual life of the West was in Africa Thence it was that new life flowed into the imperial levels in the second century, and there it was that the distinctive ideas of Latin Christianity were worked out, in the noble line of Fathers which begins with Tertullian includes Cyrian, Minutius Felix, Lactantius Arnobius of Sicca and ends with Augustine[40] The African Church had particularly strong roots in the life of the people, long before the conversion of Constantine it numbered over a hundred bishops[41]

The Roman culture in Africa was a thoroughly urbanised culture Around the towns were tribesmen or villagers of Berber or Punic blood and language In the urban areas culture was of a high level We learn from inscriptions of boys of fourteen or fifteen composing idylls, dialogues, epistles[42] They make

improvised speeches and draw crowds to their declamations Oratory was early developed as a fine art From the time of Juvenal Africa was the Nurse of Pleaders, and Leptis produced both the leading lawyer Septimius Severus whom Statius praised, and Julianus Salvianus, the greatest lawyer of his age, who drew up for Hadrian the legal code which held the field for two centuries Cornutus, under Nero, wrote an oratorical handbook (in both Greek and Latin), and Tertullian gave decisively to Western Christianity its strong legal attitudes and terms In the second century recitations and declamations, less popular in Italy, were a mass attraction in Africa The travelling sophist or lecturer was still a familiar figure in Augustine's day The *Florida* of of Appuleius gives us an idea of the way they talked to the admiring crowds Many towns had excellent public libraries We can still see the one at Thamugadi—a colonnaded court leading into a semicircular hall with niches for the rolls (reached from a platform) and with a gallery above for further shelves [43] Four of the great African Fathers had kept schools of rhetoric

In early days Greek culture had been the dominant influence, but from the second century on it lost ground Greek became an unpopular subject, though taught in the secondary schools The trouble of learning it "drenched with gall all the sweetness of Greek legend"[44] The theatre was always popular at Carthage, but though actors and dancers, and the themes of their performances, were often Greek, audiences may not have known the language very well Sometimes a Latin translation was used, or an interpreter explained the story before the show began Some shows were purely mime, without words Movement and music were more important than speech Pantomime continued popular right up to the days of the Vandals, when a pigmy mime dancer performed *Andromache* and the *Rape of Helen* [45] Indeed Salvian declares that the Christians of Cirta and Carthage were cheering the charioteers or laughing in the theatres, when the Vandals closed round the walls [46]

But it was on a mixture of Greek and native cultures that the imperial Latin culture was imposed, and the result was a rich turmoil capable of breaking out in many new directions

The first great irruption of African influences into the main stream of culture came in the second century with Fronto and

Appuleius These two men brought a new life into Latin Their great work has seldom been sufficiently appreciated and understood They were the leaders of the *elocutio novella*, which broke into the decadence of Latin literature of the second century and enabled it to stand up against the revived Greek energies Without exaggeration it has been said that they saved Latin from becoming a patois Of course, they were able to do so because they had behind them strong rekindling social forces, but that does not alter the fact that they were the men who did the necessary work of cultural reorganisation Out of this rebirth of Latin in the *elocutio novella* came the important African patristic literature from Tertullian to Augustine and the work of the rhetorical schools at Bordeaux and elsewhere in Gaul, which we shall consider in the next chapter "The Church, the schools, and the populace, being thus united in the use of Latin the inrush of barbarism produced far less effect than it would otherwise have done "[47]

The work of Fronto and Appuleius organised the new cultural forces the new linguistic forms in which classical culture proper (the Latin writers from Vergil to Statius) was reformulated and vitally linked with the life of people in general The crisis in language marks the first full extension of the Empire's urban culture—and, in the West, the stabilisation of Latin as the general medium of intercourse

Cornelius Fronto was educated at Cirta and then Carthage He went to Rome and gained various high offices but at the cost of some struggle with the Italian aristocracy He reached the consulship and was one of the main tutors of the joint heirs of the Empire, Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus In the literary field he attacked the influence of Seneca and demanded a return to simpler models In his creed an archaising and a popularising tendency were inextricably mixed "Coming from a district whither the influence of Silver Latin had hardly penetrated speaking the popular dialect taken over by the veterans of Sittius, and devoted from youth to the study of ante classical writings, he conceived the idea of restoring strength to the language by infusing into the literary idiom the popular elements that constitute the only source to which an attenuated speech can return for a renewal of vigour '[48] Archaising trends, which as in Varro

and Sallust had been bound up politically with a nostalgia for the sturdy yeoman past of Republican Rome, were thus in Fronto raised to a new level and given coherence in terms of a considered literary movement of revolt.

To bring that revolt to fruition, it would have had to be linked with a political and social movement for increased personal freedom in the Empire. Because it lacked that link, it was partly frustrated, thrown back on itself. The popularising intention was partly frozen into an antiquarian revival. But only partly. Enough new life did flow into the upper levels of culture to carry it on into new adaptations of the utmost importance for the future.[49] (Archaisms were often, we must remember, popular turns of phrase which had been ignored by the classicists. This is proved by the fact that they reappear in later writers untouched by the archaistic fashion or in the Romance languages.)

Having attained a considerable fortune, Fronto retired and gave himself up to rhetorical studies. He gathered disciples round him, who included many Africans. Some went back to Africa; others stayed at Rome as teachers of the African youths who came to study there. Two leading members of his school were Sulpicius Apollinaris, from Carthage, who taught the future Emperor Pertinax and wrote metrical prologues to Plautus, Terence, Vergil; and Aulus Gellius, of whose nationality we are not sure, and whose *Attic Nights* gives us a series of conversations of the type carried on among the members of the school.[50] The life depicted is one of endless enthusiasm for literary discussion, in which the showing-up of some sciolist is a memorable excitement. The scholars live amiably and quietly; and at dinner a slave reads a grammatical treatise while they eat—and then they talk, talk, passionate for the purity of language. And if they are young enough, they may archaise so effectively as to be thought to speak Etruscan.

Lucius Appuleius was born at Madaura, a veteran colony on the borders of Numidia and Gaetulia. He was educated at Carthage, but went on to Athens and other Greek towns, and then to Rome. Returning to Africa about 155, he made a rich marriage with a widow, and became a rhetor. Later he was appointed Director of the Imperial Worships. I have no space here to examine this remarkable writer at any length. In his

Metamorphoses (Golden Ass) he contrived a magnificent allegory of the fall and redemption of man in pagan terms, a direct reply to Christian claims to own the key to such themes.[51] But what concerns us here is his effect on language

From one angle the prose of Appuleius is a wild medley of every rhetorical trick: "antithesis, *isokolon* with *homoioteleuton*, play on words, the complete transfusion of prosaic and poetical expression, the frivolous method of using language as the subject of an experiment in the coinage of new words with an occasional mixture of archaisms" So Norden But such a catalogue gives no idea of what Appuleius was really doing Closer to the reality is what Raby says of the tremendous liturgical outburst to Isis in Book IX of the *Metamorphoses*, beginning *Tu quidem sancta et humani generis sospitatrix perpetua* "This is a rhythmical poem, anticipating or foreshadowing the poetry of the future, which was to spring from the manifold suggestions conveyed by those who wielded this rhetorical prose more boldly than others "[52]

Bouchier says well "In Appuleius the reaction against the far-fetched turns of expression, the epigrams and high-sounding commonplaces of the Silver Age reaches its climax . . . Amidst the overthrow of recognised canons of taste, Latin seemed to be recovering the faculty of compounding words and of forming new derivatives and diminutives The diction of Appuleius is copious, evincing the greatest art, carefully concealed so as to present the appearance of perfect spontaneity He was the first to introduce the Oriental warmth of colouring and the minute description, which invest with a charm the poetical prose now superseding regular verse.[53] The classical framework, as to a lesser extent in some of Fronto's descriptive passages, has almost vanished Instead, we have a series of long rambling clauses, perpetually refining, rejecting, and strengthening The old devices of antithesis, emphasis, and amplification disappear, and in their place are flowery but shapeless sentences, in which epithet after epithet is heaped up, or, again, short symmetrical clauses, often alliterative or rhyming, succeed one another without a pause or attempt at subordination "[54]

The only part of that statement with which I dissent is the term "shapeless" As Raby saw in the long liturgical address to Isis, there is a great groundswell of vast new rhythms. Needless

to say, not all the writing is so successful. But in most "shapeless" passages there is an architectonic element obscurely at work, sometimes weakening and breaking up, sometimes pulling the whole thing together.[55]

Before I pass on, I wish, however, to make clear what I mean by the African element in this creative break-through. Above, I mentioned the part that the Celts of North Italy, such as Catullus, Cinna, Vergil, Livy, played in creating the imperial culture. I did not mean they mixed some mysterious Celtic essence, or even Celtic constructions, with their Latin. What I meant was that as people of a less-developed area, in which the peasantry no doubt clung to various survivals of the clan forms in disintegration, they brought to bear on the metropolitan culture a sense of contrast, a broadening focus. Out of the spiritual tension between their regional levels and the metropolitan, they found their creative release into deepened apprehensions of the world and man. Circumstances were not the same in the second century, when the Africans gave the fresh lease of life to the metropolitan levels; but the same principle can be applied. Technically, it is the inrush of fresh Asianic elements of rhetoric which makes the new style, partly conflicting and partly merging with the quest for archaic and popular forms. But if it was merely a technical matter, there seems no reason why the new impulse should come so largely from Africa rather than from Italy itself. Appuleius, born in a small town where his father was councillor, was reared in an area where he was in contact with many barbarian ways of life, and Medaura itself no doubt had a rough and-ready municipal democracy among the free Romans. Coming from this life to Carthage, where the same sort of tensions existed in a looser and more confused fashion, he could go on to absorb the full Asianic technique with spirit and senses pricked into a quickened power to grasp contrast and union, conflict and harmony.[56]

It is in such terms that we must understand the new tensions set up between African and Asianic-Greek cultures, and the creative resolution in Appuleius's work.

8. *Verse in Africa* More inscriptions in verse (often in complex or acrostic forms) occur than in any other province[57] "Barbarous

in form and language, they confessedly emanate from men of humbler station—a courier, a reaper, or goldsmith This of itself implies a wider dispersion of the taste for versification than could be inferred from a too great precision, such as would result from the employment of professional epitaph-writers "[58] The Latin poets of Africa were late in developing In the reign of Carus we meet Nemesianus of Carthage, who wrote a long poem on the Hunt and four Eclogues The style imitates Vergil, but the romantic realism shows a divergence from the classical norms Clemens, a friend of Appuleius, wrote an epic on Alexander; and the elder Gordian, the ill fated Emperor of Africa, wrote a poem in thirty books on the exploits of Antoninus Pius and Aurelius [59]

Terentianus the Moor, grammarian of the third century, wrote an elegant and extremely prosaic treatise in verse on letters, syllables and words [60] More interesting to us is Commodianus, who seems a lawyer of heathen origin—perhaps from Gaza in Palestine, though his development belongs to Africa [61] From internal evidence he has been taken to be one of the African bishops chosen from the lower orders, who were scarcely superior to the ordinary presbyters His hexameter verses are full of popular elements both in language and metre Romance usages appear, such as neuter plurals mistaken for feminine singulars in *-a* comparatives are formed from *plus*; the use of the infinite gives way to subordinate clauses with *quod, quia, quoniam* cases are confused and are being superseded by prepositions In the verse, assonance alliteration end rhyme and leonine inner-rhyme thicken Distinction of long and short syllables relax in the first four feet of the line, then the last two feet try to assert the closing effect of an hexameter Unaccented long syllables are beginning to be treated as short.[62] 'His peculiar prosody is plainly deliberate Only a very few lines are wholly quantitative, and none are wholly accentual, except where accent and quantity happen to coincide Much of the pronunciation of modern Italian may be traced in his remarkable accentuation of some words like Italian, he both throws back the accent off a long syllable and slides it forward upon a short one "[63]

In short, there is an entangled mixture of classical and popular elements in Commodianus's verse 'Politically also, in his

Instructiones, in his *Carmen Apologeticum*, he attacks with apocalyptic virulence the Jews and the Pagans, even Rome This attitude was no longer admissible when Christianity was reconciled with the Empire As to the form, educated Christians were ashamed of it " Jerome called its style "an intermediate language approximating to verse ".

Commodianus is then the first sign in verse of a large-scale upheaval from below. In rough form he sketches out the disruptive elements that are going to shake and reinvigorate the imperial culture, and which merge with the organising factors of the rhetorical tradition to beget the new orientations of the various poets we are soon to discuss, as well as Fronto and Appuleius He speaks for the most rowdy and unreconciled sections of the Christian movement, who still heard with understanding of the symbols the wild anti-imperial denunciations of such works as *Revelations*[64] The strength of those sections in Africa is attested, not only by such work as that of Commodianus, but also by the semi-heretical insurrectionary groups of Christians who became common as the imperial control weakened

These dissident elements appear strongly in the Donatist movement, a sort of Jacquerie which has embryonic democratic elements When Diocletian instituted the second (and last) general persecution, the vast majority of Christian priests and laity in Africa abjured their creed by offering up pagan sacrifice, and this led to a schism, in which the more staunch believers split from the established Church These men were led by Donatus, Bishop of Bagaia, and the most active zealots were called Circumcelliones, wandering holy men From them "no one's possessions were safe," writes Bishop Optatus in *On the Donatist Schism* "Certificates of debt lost their value and no creditor could collect All were terrified by the letters of these men who boasted they were the leaders of the saints, and if there was any delay in complying with their orders a frenzied mob appeared at once and there was a reign of terror   Masters were thrown out of their chariots and compelled to run before their slaves, who took their place "[65]

These details leave beyond doubt the strong social and economic motivation of the schismatics, who had come to the conclusion that the Church had compounded with iniquity[66] But the directly

revolutionary emotions were fused with ideas of world-end and death-exaltations The Governor sent troops to the Fairs at which the Circumcelliones did much of their agitation Many were killed outright or beheaded, 'and you may count their bodies to-day by the whitened altars and tables" Soon they increased in numbers again, "and Donatus led a demented mob against Macarius To the same class belong the men who, seeking a false martyrdom, brought about their own deaths, and those who cast their vile souls from the summits of high mountains" (iii, 4)

The Donatists were strong as ever in the days of Augustine, and it was in fact that saint s inability to convert them to orthodoxy by argument which convinced him that the parable of the banquet (Matt. xxii 2) gave Gospel authority for the principle of forcible suppression of dissenters

9 *Note on Verse forms* But at this point perhaps it is only fair to give some explanation for the ordinary reader about the difference between quantitative and rhythmical verse forms All verse when spoken has a texture composed of stress pitch and quantity as well as its actual syllabic substance Stress is the "accentuation, the emphasis laid on syllable or word" Pitch is the "degree of acuteness or graveness of tone" Quantity is the musically measured shortness or length of syllabic sounds

In English verse, pitch and quantity are present, but stress is the governing factor and we scan verse mainly by marking the stressed and unstressed syllables In Greek however, though pitch played a considerable part and stress of a kind was present, the governing factor was quantity Greek verse developed its organisation in an inseparable relation to music. It was through that connection that the Greeks first of men were able to build up their definite stanzaic forms their definite metrical schemes within the stanzas But when music broke away and verse had to develop more or less on its own the domination of quantity weakened. One result is that we cannot really read Greek verse as the Greeks read it, our aural discipline is on a different basis

Pitch-accent exists in English, and poets sometimes exploit it, e g Shakespeare in *Troilus and Cressida*

A slave whose gall coins slanders like a mint.

This example, with some from Milton is given by Mr W H Shewring who says "One's voice will naturally rise on the word *coins*, and thus indirectly throws the metaphor into relief"

In Greek spoken verse the pitch accent must have counted for something—perhaps far more than we think—but its part was subordinate, and certainly the main contrast between English and Greek verse lies rather in their metrical principles In Greek spoken verse the quantities of syllables were fixed they were either 'long' or 'short", and a 'long' was regarded as twice the length of a 'short" so that two "shorts" could under certain conditions be substituted for it Metre was based not as in English, upon the relation of stress accents but, as in Latin upon this principle of quantity, i e the relative duration or musical time of the syllables and silent intervals

This statement does not imply that stress accent played no part at all in the spoken verse of the Greeks or that quantity plays no part in ours In the best English verse quantity is treated with respect, and may even be regarded as a structural element side by side with stress Yet even so stress in English is the basic and dominant factor and English syllables, owing partly to its effects and partly to the nature of our syllabation cannot be sharply distinguished as 'long' or "short." Their quantities are much more various, and often very hard to determine [67]

Latin verse in many ways represented a halfway house between the Greek and English systems Classical Latin verse is organised on the quantitative basis, on the metrical scheme of long and short syllables But there did not lie behind it the rich musical and mathematical development which was bound up with Greek verse forms In fact, in its earlier period Latin verse had not been quantitative at all We have a number of fragments from that period The verse "is based on word accent rather than on quantity, and is in this respect like English verse The theses (ictus syllables) are not necessarily long, but the accented syllable of every word, whether long or short, must stand as thesis "[68] Between this type of verse, where the rhythmical divisions correspond in general with divisions of the sense, and where syncopation is fairly frequent, and the fully classical type, there emerged a type called Saturnian Here the pressures making for quantitative controls are growing stronger, but have not finally come to a head Syncopation was weaker, and the ictus syllable was long (though resolvable into two shorts)

But the invasive Greek pressures drove Latin still further along the quantitative road, and classical Latin verse seeks to import all the Greek forms and methods The result is only partially successful Greek, with its greater number of short syllables,

attains a fluidity and variety in its quantitative verse forms, which Latin never did But we must not think of what happened as the shunting of Latin up an alien road In the period between the early accentual verse and the Saturnians the verse organisation of Latin is rough, largely unformed, there are all sorts of possibilities pressing in Rome's entry into the Mediterranean world into the Near East, meant that she had to absorb Greek culture and give it a new form adequate to the new imperial State which she was building up She took over the Greek forms and tried to re create them but in the process they were heavily modified The Vergilian hexameter, which was the most highly organised poetic utterance in classical Latin, was a very fine instrument, but it was more unlike than like the Homeric hexameter

Stress had emerged as an important element in metre, though kept under as a lesser element through the Greek influences It remained in classical Latin verse as what we may call a basic contrapuntal device, which showed how the Greek centre of form control was no longer present And we must remember that the developments brought about by Greek influences would not have been equal and constant all over the Latin speaking areas At some levels attitudes close to those revealed in the early carmina or the Saturnian verses would naturally persist Further, into the area of the metropolitan Graeco Roman culture new peoples kept intruding The fight to "spread civilisation"—to expand the Graeco Roman urban middle class culture—involved the fight for the classical verse forms, with which in turn the whole intellectual organising forms of rhetoric and dialectic were involved The fight to expand and preserve therefore by its very nature brought about a continual modification, and as the original Greek centralising principles weakened, the classical verse forms also weakened The transforming force was inevitably expressed in a movement towards accentual verse, towards the replacement of quantity by stress as the dominant factor in verse

In some ways this movement can be stated as the assertion of suppressed popular forces But to reduce it to that would be extreme over simplification The series of changes through which Roman society went involved a continual shift from the old

centres of living, the old organising centres of experience; and in this shift the cultural pressures breaking in on the quantitative system of verse and demanding a new organising centre were very complex. Some notion of how complex they were will arrive out of our narrative.

some of whom in fact were levantines The prestige of Greek is shown by the attitudes of the emperors Hadrian's tastes were altogether Greek Marcus Aurelius, so "Roman" a type, expressed his inner life in Greek But after the neoplatonists the East had little to show outside the religious area Julian, who sought to revive neoplatonic paganism, was the last figure with any force of character

2 *The West in the Fourth Century* In the West there was a gradual revival, gathering momentum towards the end of the century One historian with a vigorous mind, Ammianus Marcellinus, wrote in Latin, though he was a Syrian of Antioch The Roman Q Aurelius Symmachus, who was typical of cultural trends at Rome, and who wrote panegyrics, discourses to the Senate, and letters, was a thoroughly dull fellow, in whom the rhetorical tradition is seen at its most impoverished and febrile level P Optatianus Profirius, whom Constantine called *Dearest Brother*, was City Prefect in 329 and 333, and shows the same pretentious sterility in verse forms He wrote poems in the figures of palm tree, organ, panpipe, altar, ship and *chi-rho* His fifteenth poem is a monstrous instance of mechanical ingenuity The first line consists of words of two syllables the second of words of three syllables, the third of words of four syllables, the fourth of words of five syllables, the fifth begins with a one syllable word and goes on till it ends with a five syllable word, the seventh gives all the parts of speech, then come some lines which when read backward make up a poem in a different metre [3] But outside Rome important things were happening

To show the more serious forces at work at this period, I have translated work by the following poets

(i) *Phocas*, a grammarian who wrote a metrical life of Vergil The Preface is an invocation to the Muse of History, which carries on the republican tradition that the writer should be unmoved in his conscience for the truth and which interestingly expresses an anti rhetorical plea.[4]

(ii) The anonymous author of a passionate address to the sun, which shows how solar monotheism could stir the last pagans [5]

(iii) *Euclerius*, who shows the conforming connection of Christian faith and Roman political creed

(iv) *Flavius Avianus*, who wrote forty-two fables, and whose date is not exactly known

(v) *Eustbenius*, who gives a glint of the delight in Nature which keeps revealing itself in these later poets

(vi) An anonymous epigrammatist scribbling in a palace-anteroom, with a faintly ironic smile

(vii) *Tiberianus*, who may be either a Gallic or African poet His prayer seems the work of a neoplatonic pagan He knows the rhetorical devices and themes, but has a fresh note—especially in his charming poem on the stream, where a new love of Nature definitely finds expression This poem is written in a popular metre disdained by the classical poets, the long trochaic verse, *versus popularis*, which Aristophanes knew and which was sung by Roman legionaries on the march Its popular nature is shown further by the fact that S Hilary early used it for a hymn about 350 It was effectively developed by Prudentius and Venantius, and played an important part in Christian hymnology Venantius's *Pange Lingua* is one of the greatest of Christian hymns In the Carolingian period the Church used the metre in the hymn for the blessing of oils, with a refrain "O Redeemer, take this Song of those who sing as one with You" Bede knew the metre well, and in his treatise on Prosody noted how it fell into two short parts By the eleventh century poets doubled the first half of the verse and made rhyming couplets, then they added another half length

> Welcome Mother holy plighting
> Three in One are thus uniting
> you their Bed of Harmony

Which when doubled develops a stanza rhyming *aabccb* Peter Damian (eleventh century) used the trochaic tetrameter as the model for his rhythm on the Glories of Paradise "This is the process by which the new arose out of the old in order to meet the needs of Christian poetry and hymnology" The early troubadour, Arnaut de Maroill, used it as a long line still—in *Plus blanca es que Elena*—but S Thomas Aquinas had already given it an internal rhyme in his Vesper Hymn for Corpus Christi In both the long and the divided form it has played a large part in modern lyrics •

(viii) The anonymous author of *The Vigil of Venus* also used this

2

THE FIRST SYNTHESIS (A D 350–400)

1 *West and East* We open, then, in the fourth century, with Christianity triumphing and the State breaking down, and with the old culture still reigning despite everything The symbolic Statue of Victory has gone, after debate from the Senate House, but government is still formally carried on in the name of the Senate and the Roman people The altars of the gods get no more incense, but Vergil's poems are still declaimed in the Forum of Trajan

The Empire, it must be recalled had two languages, Latin and Greek, and the two ends of the Mediterranean never fully grew together The eastern end was old in civilisation and in industrial processes In the early period of the Empire the West went rapidly ahead in urbanisation, but never caught up the East, and with the breaks in the third century the East heavily reasserted its craft supremacy, its mercantile lead From it had come Christianity, and it remained throughout the most thickly populated [1] The West never had anything like the great industrial cities of Alexandria and Antioch The transfer of the imperial capital to Byzantium early in the fourth century showed the rising dominance of the East Colonies of Syrians were to be found everywhere [2]

The cultural movement throughout the Empire in the West and the East were dissimilar Rome saw the Empire begin with the great outburst of poetry which included the work of Catullus Vergil, Lucretius The secondary phase of the revolution was accompanied by another though milder outburst, in which appeared satirists like Juvenal and Persius lyrical writers dealing with everyday affairs like Martial, and at least one great prose-work, the *Satyricon* of Petronius But after that, though writers may live at Rome (as Fronto did), it is not in Italy that we must seek any new creative sources Spain, Africa and Gaul are the

areas where new writers appear; and from the second to fourth centuries it is Africa in particular which supplies the fresh talent. The intellectual development of Western Christianity, from Tertullian to Augustine, occurred almost entirely in North Africa, with Carthage as the cultural centre.

Africa, then, with a group of prose-writers of whom Fronto and Appuleius were the most outstanding, picked up the thread in the later part of the second century. I shall discuss African events yet again in Chapter 4; and for the moment it is enough to note that the flagging central government somehow let new energies emerge in the provinces for a while. Then the anarchy of the third century disturbed the whole scene; and not till the partial stabilisation of the fourth century can we make out the contours of what has been going on in the cultural field.[7] Much has broken down and been lost; but a busy effort is going on everywhere to recapture tradition, and in the process many new directions are willy-nilly found.

In the East, however, the pattern had been quite different. There, the first century, the revolutionary period between Caesar and Vespasian, was sterile—except that in the depths a great religious movement was maturing. But with the stabilisation of the second century and a regaining of comparative prosperity the Greek-speakers looked on at what had happened with a far fuller perspective than any Roman had attained. There was much philosophy and history of a high order written—Dion Chrysostom, Plutarch, Epictetus and Lucian (a Syrian Semite) among the moralists and philosophers; Herodian, Dexippos, Appian, Dion Cassius and Arrian among the historians. And a rebirth of the romance began with Heliodorus of Emesa and led on to Longus (author of *Daphnis and Chloe*) and Achilles Tatius. At the same time Greek science had a strange advance, involved with the upward movement of production at this time; Galen developed the technique of medicine and Ptolemy that of astronomy. Then, as the contraction of the imperial economy affected the East also, the secular elements fell away; and the third century (when all was confusion in the West) saw the important neoplatonic mystics, Plotinus and Porphyry.

All the West had to put against this brilliant cultural life of the East was the work of a group of jurists (Gaius, Ulpian, etc.),

metre—fitly, since he was probably composing for some popular festival The poem is purely pagan, but surely belongs to this late period with its richly romantic vision of tree and flower—and its sudden romantic contrast at the end between the joyous earth of festival and the lonely singer The author was probably either Gallic or African The use of the refrain also shows the new relation to popular elements, it "has its internal recurrence, the folding back of the musical phrase upon itself, and as it comes over and over again it seems to get the whole poem swaying to its own music" And in the poem itself—"partly a conscious literary artifice, partly a real reversion to the childhood of poetical form" —throughout the elaborate simplicity and florid variations, "the ringing phrases turn and return and expand and interlace and fold in as though set in motion by a strain of music"[7]

Nothing could more strongly show that something decisive was happening to culture than this loving use of the metre in which the soldiers had sung their songs at the triumphs of Caesar

(ix) The anonymous author of *De Rosis Nascentibus* This poem has been attributed both to Vergil and Ausonius, its date is probably fourth century The source of Herrick's *Gather ye Rosebuds*, it has much of the kindling Nature love of the trochaic poems, and a homely clarity all its own but its more classic metre does not encourage such abandon as the trochaics *O Look* is another slight poem incorrectly attributed to Ausonius[8]

(x) *Ausonius* But he raises so many points that he needs a section all to himself

3 *Ausonius* Decimus Magnus Ausonius was born about A D 310 His father, who seems of yeoman stock, settled as a physician at Bordeaux, where the poet was born Ausonius's grandfather on his mother's side was an astrologer, though he preferred not to say so, the grandmother was nicknamed Maura (Mooress)

> Her name was given in play for long ago
> her girl friends called her Maura she was so swarthy
> But in her soul there was no dark
> She d never overlook an indulgent lapse
> but kept herself and her family on the straight.[9]

Ausonius depicts his father as a moderate, kindly man, who disliked gossip and scandal, and his mother as a lady of the solidly domestic style, wool spinning and modest

The frontiers were still secure, though from Trier southwards the towns were protected with big walls In the sheltered Bordeaux area things were still prosperous The Gallic schools had a high reputation and drew students from all over the Empire, they even sent professors to Rome and Byzantium Formerly at Marseilles had been a famous Greek university, which, according to Strabo, had thrown even Athens into the shade, but during the Empire it was beaten by the schools of east and central Gaul By the fourth century Gallic style was famed for its floridity. Jerome relates the Gallic Buskin to an elaborate and verbose diction Yet it was only about this time that the Roman tongue and its imperial culture really became acclimatised Even the educated still had traces of the old dialects, Ausonius says his father was ill at ease in Latin, but at home with Greek "In the beginning of the fifth century Sulpicius Severus represents a Gallic monk as apologising for the barbarism of his rustic idiom But the literary renaissance of the fourth century completed the Romanisation of the great province of the West and made it the last stronghold of Roman culture In this movement the more ancient schools of the south east failed to maintain their old prestige "[10] Bordeaux stood at the head of the Gallic schools, the centre of rhetoric in the whole Empire Symmachus, mentioned above as the leading exponent of cultural virtues in Italy during the second half of the fourth century, admitted the debt he owed to the training at Bordeaux, and while the schools there exported professors to other Gallic schools as well as to Byzantium, out of the twenty five whom Ausonius describes only five were not natives of the town

Ausonius went to school at Bordeaux, though he worked for a time under his uncle Arborius at Toulouse About 334 we find him installed as a teacher of grammar, he married and prospered, he became a professor of rhetoric He had a strong family sense, and has given a set of miniature portraits of his family group in his *Parentalia*, which he composed at the age of seventy His wife he wrote of with affection, and mourned her death, but did not marry again In the Preface to his *Parentalia* he admits the pagan basis of this family sense which was so strongly opposed to the dominant Christian creed and its denunciation of all family ties "The booklet is entitled *Parentalia* after the Solemn Day anciently

so-named, long ago instituted by Numa for offerings to the Shades of Relatives The love respect of the living has indeed no holier work than to remind us with fit reverence of the lost ones" Though Ausonius could on occasion speak the correct language of a Christian and was no doubt never aware of any insincerity, his conformity was without depth, he remained all his life a civic-minded professor with an obsession for the rhetorical culture of his day

His strong but simple group-sense appears also in the collection of pleasant poems he wrote about his fellow teachers In his mild gossipy way, he often gives us a plain, colloquial vignette, which is something genuinely new, the forms may be superficially wrought out of professorial memories of the classics, but the total effect breaks through the correct aims—as if two or three layers of opacity had cracked in the language The result is thin, but somehow shadowed with new tints of living movement All the citations, plagiarisms and pastiche cannot destroy the modest but important originality. The style may be that of an "old professor who has his head well furnished with consecrated expressions and who believes he renders a supreme homage to his so-long-expounded authors by thinking and speaking of them incessantly" Still, the key thing is what Jullian calls, "*un je ne sais quoi de confiant et de familial*" [11] There is more than a cracking of the fixed forms of language, there is also the cracking of character stereotypes Ausonius's simple desire to conform to the virtues of the great past leads him in his confused world towards new apprehensions [12]

His *Commemoratio* of the Bordeaux professors has the same pagan piety as his *Parentalia* It looks friendlily into the relationships of this world and sees only a cancelling dark on the outer edges And it amiably records the familiar faces The professors were a mixed bunch, some obscure and hard up, others rich enough to dine well and to mix equally with the landed gentry Exemption from taxes and public burdens were certainly a help, the schools were well attended. (The education there was a social necessity for the upper classes who could not partake of trade and had no connection with the Army The lads of lesser families needed it to get a governmental job) Sometimes a rhetor married an heiress On the other hand, fees were at times hard to collect,

students left a class just when fees were coming due, or went off to a less strict teacher.[12] The teachers occasionally formed a union to protect themselves. At Rome Theodosius issued regulations, which included certificates of origin, registration, police control, conclusion of course at the age of twenty. The African students at Rome were so rowdy that Valentinian threatened deportation if they didn't behave with more dignity and stop frequenting the theatre and festivals. In Carthage they terrorised the streets and interrupted classes, though they also were ready to escort home an admired professor or kidnap other students for his classes.[14]

One of Ausonius's acquaintances made patient research into pontifical lore and the origins of Roman institutions; another had mastered the whole 600 tomes of Varro.[15] A father and a son were of Druid descent. Of the father, Ausonius writes:

> You from the stock of Bayeux's Druids came,
> if there is truth in fame.
> Your family-names from great Belenus' shrine
> were drawn, your hallowed line.
> You, *Patera*, so named, in mystery,
> Apollo's votary—
> Your father and brother after *Phoebus* named,
> your son by *Delphi* claimed. . . .
> Gay, modest, comely, in your lengthening course
> you aged like eagle or horse

The son pushed his way into imperial politics, gained distinction, and then suffered a reverse. Dying in middle age, he did not see his wife and daughter turn Priscillianists and suffer execution at the hands of a usurping emperor.[16]

About 364, Valentinian called Ausonius to Trier to act as tutor for his son Gratian. Now at court, Ausonius went from honour to honour. After reaching the prefecture of Gaul, Libya and Italy, he became consul in 379.[17] His son Hesperius was associated with him in his prefecture and probably did much of the work. In 383 Gratian was murdered, and Ausonius returned to Bordeaux and his estates on the Garonne.

His voluminous works include *Epistles*, a long poem on the Moselle, *The Masque of the Seven Sages*, a *Nuptial Cento* (made up of Vergilian tags) for Valentinian, *Eclogues*, epigrams, a narrative

Cupid Crucified, *Thanksgiving for his Consulship* The *Ephemeris* gives a typical day he calls his servant Parmeno in flowing sapphics, changes to quick iambic dimeters to wake him up, calls for shoes, clothes, water, and bids the oratory be opened, then indulges in long dull prayer, gives orders to the cook and calls in his short hand writer—then the poem breaks off The *Moselle* was written when he was about sixty, and is a remarkable poem, every now and then it bursts into a passage which shows a closer and richer feeling for Nature than any previous Latin writer True, it lacks the greatness of many a Vergilian descriptive moment; but there is something new, something more consciously realised of delight in the minute particulars of Nature "He is looking at Nature at last" says Glover, "and as he realises her in his thought, his language rises with his conception. His stream is a real stream, the water flows and the weeds are waving we can see the ribbed sand and the gleam of the pebble, and, as so often in Virgil, the verse and the picture explain each other"[18]

The development of detailed realistic description had occurred earlier in prose rhetoric, and thence invaded poetry It can take the form of an unselective complication of naturalistic detail—*la manie de tout peindre*, says Chaix of this tendency in Sidonius[19] But it also had its valuable and vitalising aspect Writers are looking at things feeling them afresh, instead of seeking verbal variations of an established set of generalised descriptions (Blake's defence of "minute particulars", against the Johnsonian dictum that poetry deals with the large generalisation shows a related development in the Romantic Revival, and explains how the attitude can be linked with to an anti-classical, anti authoritative trend)

The larger violences and disturbances of the age find no echo in Ausonius's verse, except in casual references such as that to the execution of his friend s wife and daughter for heresy He grew up with the adoption of Christianity by the State saw the pagan reaction under Julian and the Arian schisms he saw his pupil Gratian murdered and a tyrant established. And it does not seem to have bothered him very much This almost entire inability to believe that anything could seriously shatter the Roman State and the rhetorical discipline is something which will recur throughout our survey[20]

PHOCAS

(1) INVOCATION TO THE MUSE OF HISTORY
(Preface to his Life of Vergil)

O reverend guardian of antique things,
you, golden Clio, taught well to report
Time's fugitive courses and the deeds of kings,
attend my thought.

You let no act that's great to fade away,
you save the notable thing from death and store
in books the monuments of a former day
fresh evermore.

You wipe all rouge of rhetoric from your pages,
and you alone. Whatever is truth's decision
you utter clear through all the coming ages
with plain precision.

The ageing titles of ancestral times
you mend with seal of youth's unaltering flower.
Virtue's your fighting friend. All cornered crimes
pale at your power.

You flee the noise of law, the bustling square—
your guide, a charming song that looks beyond—
but won't have shackles on your speech or bear
a metric bond.

Smile on these words. I must recount the story
of the Etruscan bard whose voice was strong
and Roman, claiming an eternal glory
with holy song.

ANON

(II) IN PRAISE OF THE SUN

When Nature's power first separated Earth and Sky,
the Sun gave Day He forced the cloudy vast to fly,
and on a world of rose he lifted up his face
In beauty burned the stars that move in peace through space,
for Chaos means no Sun He came, and we behold
his light and feel his warmth diffuse the skies with gold
The seed of sprouting Man got virtue from the Sun,
and things that swim were born, and also things that run,
the beasts of earth, the shoals of sea, the birds of air
Sustaining steadily, his warmth is everywhere
to spread the gift of life that honeys in our veins.
Out of the crimson gulf his team arising strains—
with nostrils wide they pant abroad the mist of light
The Sun breaks Darkness down He flushes into sight
and sprinkles dews of flame across the fields of sky
but when he clears at length the crocus world on high,
then all the prisoners of silent night he frees
Glowing appear the fields, the meadow flowers, the trees
Placid the seas become and all the greening streams,
across the trembling waves he skims his golden gleams
Then tighter grow the horses' jewelled reins He turns
The axle's made of gold with gold the chariot burns
to show Phoebean state across the dazzled skies

O he's the Lord of Space, and Time he sanctifies,
lifting aloft his head that glistens from the sea.
He's the One God of Life, and it is right that we
should look on him and tread the fields of flowering day
Wonderful work of Power! where Fire has utter sway,
yet owns a light of sense that's greater than its flame
Out of that spark of life all lives and bodies came
The Phoenix shows this law in her reviving pyre
All bodies owe their life to kindling solar fire
She seeks her death as life, her strength beyond the grave,
is born to die, and dies to find the rays that save

Still as she falls, she learns how, falling, to arise
She finds a crag, she meets the light, she gladly dies
before the shaft of heat, the death that bids her live

Sun to the outstretcht Earth a shimmering light you give
Sun, through a world of green you make sweet odours pass
Sun, in the meadow-depths for you is spread the grass
Sun, Mirror of the Sky, the God in imaged truth,
Sun, you control the Stars, Sun of eternal youth
Sun, Form of all that lives, the Centre, on you rove,
Sun, you are Liber, Ceres fostering, and Jove
Sun, you illume the Moon whose names we cannot count,
Sun, with your four horse team through spilth of fire you mount
Sun, you're Hyperion in splendid morning-light
Sun, you return the Day and gild Olympus height
Sun, when you rise the lyre in sweetness speaks our debt
Sun, in the west the sea receives you when you set
Sun, you are Summer, Autumn, Winter, and the Spring,
Sun, ages, month and day! year, hour and everything!
Sun, globe of space and golden light of life for all,
Sun, on your aid the farmer and the sailor call
Sun, you must still transcend whatever might is found
Sun, you can snuff the stars that endlessly go round
Sun, in your tranquil beams the lustrous oceans lie,
Sun, with your speeding warmth all life you purify
Sun, you're the Glory of the World the changeless One,
Glory of Day and Night, End and Beginning Sun!

COUNT EUCLERIUS

(III) PRAYER ON TAKING OFFICE

Father Omnipotent, Olympian on high,
Maker of Earth and Sea who from your home of Sky
descended, deigning in your mercy to be born
a man and on the Cross to have your body torn
that mortals might be snatched from death's devouring hate
give me a course that tells the crooked from the straight,

interpreting the hard concision of the code
of Roman Government Then, if that light's bestowed,
let me for troubled folk unbare the law and trace
the clouded origins and meaning of each case

AVIANUS

(IV) THE WOMEN AND THE WOLF

A country-nurse once told her weeping boy
"A wolf will eat you if you cry again"
A credulous wolf, who overheard with joy,
remained all night before the doors, in vain
The weary child soon drifted into sleep,
with disappointed hope the listener burned—
back to his forest-lair he had to creep,
his bitch perceived that fasting he'd returned
"Where is the usual snack?" she asked "And why
with wasted jaws come crawling in dismay?"
"Don't stare," he said "I heard a wicked lie
It's luck that, famished out, I got away
What profit could I ever hope to gain
when hearkening to the prattle of a nurse?"
Thus often must a worried man complain,
who, trusting woman, finds her art a curse

THE CRAB

A crab once tried to turn and bumped instead
on washing rocks his rugged carapace
His mother, who desired to go ahead,
admonished thus her son with moral face
"Come, leave these crooked ways and mend your gait,
don't dodge aside on any weak pretence
with ready effort take the road that's straight,
and tread the unwinding path of innocence"
The son replied "Then go in front of me
and show me what is right *I'll do it then*"
A man, defaulting, is a fool if he
accuses faults revealed by other men

EUSTHENIUS

(V) THE SEASONS

Spring combs his hair and earth is red with flowers;
in bristling fields the gifts of summer show,
the spilth of Bacchus laves autumnal hours,
then earth is muffled in her robe of snow

ANON.

(VI) THE SUPPLIANT

At Caesar's door, I sit, both night and day,
my hopes to speak my case are almost spent
Haste, easy goddesses, and humbly say
my name before our Sacred President
At least, if Caesar cannot now bestow
his grace, let someone come and bid me "Go!"

TIBERIANUS

(VII) THE STREAM

O, the Stream was flowing coolly through the meadows of the pass,
smiling with a glint of pebbles painted with the flowers and grass
Over dark blue leaves of bay and over green of myrtle-trees
slid with whispering caresses pleasantly a little breeze

Underneath, with fullblown blossoms, grass had lushly made a lair
Gilt the crocus spikes had littered it and lilies glittered there
Through the grove there softly went the breath of violets sweetening
Tall amid the jewelled graces and the bounty of the spring
goldenly the flower that Venus loves was rising in the rows,
Lucifer of colour fires and Queen of scented things, the Rose

Wetted were the forest dews upon the richly streaming ground
as the rivulets from bubbling springs made music all around
Shining with the spray they gushed and rushed and wound about
and crossed
Myrtle thickly spread about a cave, and all the cave was mossed

There, along the shade more birds than you can fancy whirred
and sang
Songs of spring among the branches with a rustling sweetness rang
Murmur of the babble-stream in all the gossip-leaves was heard
as the zephyr-muse was woken and the lyre of wind was stirred
Whosoever through the lovely green, the scent and music, strayed,
found a pleasure in the stream and breeze, the birds and flowers
and shade

GOLD

Whirled on by ghosts of night and turbid streams,
wrested by convicts from the mine's hard seams,
sought at Hell's threshold, starring pallidly
the Stygian skies for Queen Prosperinê,
staining on marriage beds a shameful mark,
unsheathing swords of murder in the dark!
The ravisher flowed on Danae's embrace,
smearing this yellow mask to foul his face
The host slew Polydorus, gold the lure
poor father seeking to make safety sure
by all that's dangerous, what is this you've done?
Gold is the sentry set to guard your son!
Now cruel snakes will keep a nest from fear,
and hunting-dogs will play with herds of deer

Why was the town of Troy by Grecians sacked?
Gold was the cause, the power behind the act.
Paris sat down to judge, with verdict sold
O listen, learn the uses found for gold
Crime has a price and maiden blush its fee,
with home and parents, law and piety,
right is betrayed, but gold will cover wrong—
Ah, are the gold streams flowing yet along?

Gold creates madness, greed, and thirst for blood.
Hide it in swollen depths and blackest mud!
leave it to Hell, O leave it well alone
for Stygian Marsh and burning Phlegethon!
in livid sands let all its fires decay
and spread no yellow filth on purer day!

A SMALL BIRD

A bird whose wings are soaked with rain
flies slow and slower with the strain;
caught in mid-thresh, it learns too late
that sodden wings increase their weight;
it sinks, its vigour flaps away—
the wings that saved can also slay.

The bird that winged towards the height
goes tumbling from its soaring flight.
What profit to have aimed so high?
The aspiring ones in ruin lie.
O learn the moral. Trust no sails
to swelling favourable gales.

PAGAN HYMN

O Power, the sky of ages worships you,
infinite in effect and one in cause!
Through mesh of time and number you still escape:
hearken to me, whatever Name you choose,
unknown, contained in joy. The mighty earth
trembles before you: wandering stars are fixed.
You are one alone, and many; you are first,
and last, and mediator, and beyond.
You know no end, but end the lapsing years.
On high, you watch eternity revolve,
the rapes of fate and lives involved with time,
since into an ellipse all force you sway
that what the stress of birth exhausts may yet
return and start the flow of time afresh.

If we may meet you in the terms of sense
and handle you, that, girt about with stars,
embrace enormously the length of space,
the hurrying image of the burning Sun
perhaps reveals your glory of flowering flame
that lights the world and wields the granted day.
You are all gods, the cause and structure of life,
all Nature, multitudinous God, and one,
Sex is fulfilled in you. From you was born
the universe, the home of Gods and men,
starred with the holy flower of glittering youth.
I beg you then, whatever purpose urges
or youth created, give the seeker hope.
Father, reveal the sacred cause of things,
the chaos of worlds that with harmonious power
you knitted weaving spirit in the web
of time and space, and merging opposites
to loose the life that strangely in bodies moves

THE RIVER

(*Fragment*)

That is the river's way:
images, falling, stay
spread in the water-light . .

THE VIGIL OF VENUS

Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

Spring is young and Spring's a song and Spring is earth that's born anew,
bidding merry Loves take hands and bidding birds go mate again
Trees let all their curling tresses down beneath the nuptial rain
On the morrow She who holds the Loves embracing subtly weaves
greening bowers with sprays of myrtle underneath the shadow of leaves.
On the morrow, lofty-seated, She will tell us what to do

Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

Now Dione with the flowering gems adorns the crimsoning Year
All the little nipple buds, that swell when west the winds appear,
widely into clusters. She cajoles then sprinkle drops of light—
Dew that cools the earth of summer, beading from the breath of Night
Quivering gleams the teardrop as it pulls and gathers all its strength
till the tiny globe of light lets go and slithers down at length
Dew which quiet pulsing stars distil when clouds are blown away
soothes the maiden pips from wetted shifts to greet the break of day
Blossoms tremulously blush to stand with all their veils withdrawn,
for the Goddess bade each virgin rose to marry in the dawn
Out of Venus bloodshed and the kiss of Love their hues were won,
out of gems, and out of flames, and out of crimsons of the Sun
Closely veiled inside her burning sheath remains each secret bride
on the morrow she will tear her shift and show the warmth inside

Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

Down the track of myrtle shade the Goddess bade her nymphs to stray
"Hurry, Nymphs, for Love has dropt his shaft, he's come on holiday"
Young and shy he looks beside the girls, but don't forget his craft
Trust no holidaying Love although he swears he's dropt his shaft
"Weaponless She bade him follow, nakedly She bade him go,
bow and arrow set aside, no harrowing torch his hands will show"
Yet, O Nymphs beware, for Love is fair and dangerous his hands
Love is wielding all his weapons still when nakedly he stands

Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

Venus has despatched her maids as calm and virginal as you
"Only one request we bring Retire, we beg you, Delian Maid,
Let no blood of forest beasts be dabbled on the peaceful shade

Venus would have come in person if a chasteness she might
sway.
Venus would have asked your presence, but you'd scorn to share
our play.
Now for three long festal-nights you'll see the bands of laughter
rove
trespassing with mingled merriments along each ringing grove.
Bright amid the garlands of the flowers, the bowers of myrtle-green,
Ceres smiling with red Bacchus and the God of Poets will be seen.
All the night the revelry will wake and songs will rouse desire,
and Dione then will rule the world. So, Delian Maid, retire."

Love for loveless ones to morrow
love for all the lovers too.

High among the flowers of Hybla Venus sets her judgment seat.
With the Graces at her side, the Laws of Love she'll there repeat
Hybla, pour your flowers out, O all the blooms that summer
yields
Hybla, don your dress of flowers through the whole of Henna's
fields,
so that She may see on youngster-buds her freshening shadow
fall
Girls of Meadow, Girls of Hill, they all obey the happy call,
Girls of Forest, Girls of Glen, the gathering Girls of Spring obey.
For the Mother of the Lad with Wings has named the meeting-day,
warning us that even naked Love can cause a girl to rue.

Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

On the morrow is the day when Heaven and Earth first learned
to mate,
when the Father from the clouds of spring begot the Year's estate,
when the bridegroom-rain flowed down to slake the body of the
bride,
feeding hungry offspring with its power, spread richly far and
wide,

when blood of curving Heaven dripped to fill with life the foaming Main—
beautifully then Dione rose from out the nuptial rain
Queen amid the two-legged watersteeds, the herds of crystal blue
Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

Now Her breath has filled our blood and mind, it fills us through and through,
till in hidden ways each life obeys Her procreative will
Through the heaven and earth and sea beneath She passed and passes still
strongly Her insinuating warmth through pathways of the seed
She has sent and taught the ways of birth and bade the world take heed
Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

Trojan with the Latin stock She long past grafted, and She drew
once a maid of the Laurentians to mingle with her Son
Mars obtained from Her the cloistered maid, a shyly virgin nun,
Straightway at Her hymeneal word the Sabine rape was done,
that the Roman tribes as citizens might worthily combine,
getting thus the race of Romulus and Caesar of Her line
Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

Joy is still the fertilising power, the fields know Venus near
Love, Her Child is country born—so runs the certain tale we hear
When the Earth in birth split open up She took him to Her breast,
and with dainty kisses of the flowers She fed him and caressed
Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

Deeply bedded, look the bulls in broom with massive flanks now lie
Every safety threading life must surely hail the marriage-tie
Bleating through the shadows look among the hes the bitches throng
Venus comes to tell the birds to be no niggards of their song

Raucous-crying swans go winging by and crash across the pool
and the nightingale is singing out where poplar-shades are cool
Surely it's a lover singing—one who sings a lover's joy—
not a wandering sufferer who laments her sister and her boy.
Loud she sings her heart out I am mute O when will my Spring
come?
when the swallow's voice will be my voice, and I no longer dumb
Lost the Muse, and now Apollo I no more may call my friend
Thus by silence fell Amyclae, and that silence was her end.

Love for loveless ones to-morrow
love for all the lovers too

ANON

TO A MISTRESS

O look, you blush, you innocent. I vow
that it's no guilty secret makes you weak.
Now like a poplar leaf you tremble, now
pallor of moonlight stains your rosy cheek.
Why, shamefaced, still from my embrace you twist;
and if there's someone by, you won't be kissed.

ON ROSES BUDDING

A dawn of spring! The light from skies of gold
had softly breathed upon the nipping air
Racing the dawn, a little breeze was bold,
it coaxed me out to find its freshening lair
Cool in the dawn, I wandered, glad to pass
between the watered plots and garden scenes
I saw the hoarfrost still on bended grass
or resting on the tops of kitchen-greens
On cabbage leaves large drops had coalesced. .
I saw the rosebuds, such as Paestum dressed,
laughing with dewdrops in the scattered rays
On frosted bushes gleamed a pearl of white,
destined to die in the first warmth of light.

Ah, had the dawn from roses thieved her hue
or yielded to the buds those warmer glows?
Both had one tint, one early birth, one dew:
Venus is Queen of morning-star and rose.
Is there one fragrance too? The dawn scents shower
on high, and roses closer waft their scent.
The Paphian goddess, ruling star and flower,
has seen them both with equal scarlets blent.

The time was near for teeming buds to spread
in even petals, fold on fold, apart.
One rose with leaves of green had capped her head;
one, narrow-sheathed, had bared a purple heart;
a third had opened out her tapering tip
and disengaged her pointed crimson crown;
a fourth had let her knot of beauty slip,
counting her petals as she settled down—
for suddenly she lifted, glorified,
her smiling calyx packed with golden seeds;
a fifth that lately burned in all her pride
had dropped her faded petals in the weeds.
I wondered much at Time's unpausing doom,
and roses that are born and then are old.
Look, while I speak, a rose has ceased to bloom,
and shakes her blushes on the chequered mould.
So many forms, so many births and joys,
one day produces, and one day destroys.

Nature, you harry beauty, to our grief.
You show your gifts and snatch before they're scanned.
Brief is a day: a rose's life as brief.
Her opening youth and age go hand in hand.
The star of dawn beholds her freshly made,
the star of eve beholds her funeral-train.
But though the rose so rapidly must fade,
warm in some following rose she lives again.
Then, girl, while youth is with you and the rose
pluck rosebuds, for your life as swiftly goes.

AUSONIUS

CLEMENS CONTEMPTUS AND JULIUS CALLIPIO, MY UNCLES

My uncles wake my elegiac strains
Contemptus, buried far in Kentish soil—
heirless he died, and scattered were the gains
for which he'd sought with long and arduous toil.
His brothers had no word. Beyond the sea
he died in youth and eager energy.

But Julius lived until he'd fully greyed,
enormous losses dogging every aim.
With courteous cheer the lavish host he played,
named me his heir, and left me but the name

Kind hearts! you mingled gravity and jest,
alike in face but different in your end.
Although denied, in parted graves, you rest,
Your lives within this farewell song I blend.

JULIA CATAPHRONIA, MY FATHER'S SISTER

For Cataphronia my aunt, lament.
    Song, let her fate be told.
Unwed, in love of virgin ways she spent
    her thrifty life, grown old.
Her means were small, yet what she could she gave
    with mothering ways to me
Hail and Farewell regretfully I wave.
    she was so motherly

PASTOR, MY SON'S CHILD

What little ghost, jostling the elder dead
now bids the dirges cry? Ah, cherished one,
Pastor, because of you my heart has bled,
the third child of Hesperius my son.

Your name was got by chance. When you were born,
a pastoral tune was blown across the day.
Too late we see the meaning now and mourn:
for soon the piping breath must ebb away.

Struck by a tile, which tumbled from the roof
where men were working, you have found your grave.
Ah, not the workman's hand deserves reproof,
but surely bloody Fate that failed to save.
For all my hopes and dear designs I sigh.
A fumbled tile was cast upon your head—
You, grown to manhood, should have watched me die
and mourned my aged body lying dead.

JULIA IDALIA, MY COUSIN

Little Idalia too is gone.
Nicknamed the Paphian was she,
with such a venus-grace she shone,
almost my sister, for she had
my aunt as mother, dear to me.
I give these verses, gently sad,
in honour of her memory.

ATTUSIA LUCANIA SABINA, MY WIFE

So far I've sung of family-grief and loss,
sorrows for which the dirges rightly start.
Now it's my pang, my staunchless wound, my cross,
my wife's sad death imprinted on my heart.

Noble, of senatorial lineage born,
Sabina drew from virtue all her worth.
When young, I wept, bereaved; and still I mourn,
though nine Olympiads have crossed the earth.

O life can bring no poppy to my grief.
Still it is fresh. To-day my dear lies dead.
All other ailments find in time relief,
with every lapsing year my wound has bled.

My wifeless misery mocks my head of grey,
and griefs, made worse by loneliness, I bear
My bed is cold, my hose more black each day
I bleed, my joys and pains I may not share

I grieve if other wives are false or true,
for still comparisons with you I strike,
and always I am hurt. I think of you.
how different the bad, the good how like

I do not mourn a life that's run to waste.
We were so young when death came parting us
You were so serious, lovely, gay, and chaste,
the grief and glory of Ausonius

Ere twenty-eight Decembers you had filled,
You went, and left two cherished children here
God as you prayed has loved them both and willed
that they should flourish, richer every year

Ah, that my death may send a spark to tell
your ashes they survive and prosper well!

PRAYER FOR JANUARY FIRST, A.D 379

O Year, with noble augury you start, for you behold
Ausonius' consulship begin. Lift up your head of gold
Eternal Sun, and let your flames of glory be increased—
come halo with your flushing pride the light that brims the East

O Year, the Father of all life! you lead us onwards still
from double facing Janus' month to dead December's chill
bring us to pelt the dying Year, a January of mirth
and through your gates drive out the Months the Twelve, across the earth.

Changing the seasons with your power, move on your wonted
track,
swinging through heaven the patterned courses of the Zodiac.
In endless revolutions bear them headlong on through space;
and when you move through downward skies, then bid the Sun
turn back
before your days have died away, that he may shorten pace
and knit his slackening fires against the winter's fierce attack.

When thirty times the moon with horns returns across the sky,
your hand shall make the dawn and dusk pass regularly by,
and keep the Sun on paths of law among the Signs on high.

THE DAILY ROUND

Already Dawn has thrown the windows wide,
the watchful swallow twitters from her nest,
but, Parmeno, you're still as sleepy-eyed
as one just gone to rest.
For an whole ice-bound winter dormice sleep,
but since they raid no stores I let them be.
You sleep so sound because you drink so deep
and gorge so greasily.
There's wool of laziness twisted in your ears,
and a thick stupor roosts inside your head.
Dawn fails for all her shower of crystal spears
to prick you out of bed.
Old stories tell of one as bad as you:
he slept for ever, snoring night and day,
because the Moon-girl wished to keep him true,
tucked dreamily away.
But up, you waster! What you need I know,
a good hard whipping. Up! or a long sleep
will strike where least expected, Parmeno.
Rise, waster, or you'll weep.
Perhaps this stanza in the Sapphic mode
lulls you too tenderly. I'll be more terse.
See if I jab you better with a goad
of quick iambic verse.

JUCUNDUS, GRAMMARIAN OF BORDEAUX AND BROTHER OF LEONTIUS

Men say that rashly in a chair you started
and that you never were grammarian.
My pleasant friend, so good and single hearted,
I hold you dearer for your zealous plan.
You loved the worthy title, though above you.
so here with solid men I name and love you.

HERCULANUS, MY NEPHEW, GRAMMARIAN OF BORDEAUX

Straight from my bosom and my class you came, awhile my pride
you showed the promise of the bud, the fruit was yet denied
you shared my classwork and in time you might have had my chair,
had not the uncertain lures of youth become a slippery snare
You met the turning of the ways, and took temptation's road—
but may your ghost find peace, I pray, at last in its abode

CRISPUS AND URBICUS, GREEK AND LATIN GRAMMARIANS

You also, Crispus, I shall praise
and sadly name for future days
    to pay my debt.
You taught the youngest boys their signs
you made them read in simple lines
    the alphabet.
Your head with wine, it's said, you fired.
Flaccus and Vergil you aspired
    to beat in fame.

Urbicus, famous for your Greek
although in Latin counted weak,
    I next must name.
When you and Crispus met, arose
a spate of equal verse and prose
    such arguing,
such eloquence! completely spelled
Homeric heroes we beheld—
    the Spartan King,

concise in charming power to teach;
Ulysses, full of warmth, whose speech
dropped flakes of snow;
or Nestor, in whose every word
a nectarous harmony was heard,
a singing flow,

Two gifted speakers, skilled in poet-lore,
learnèd in mythic tales and history!
freedmen by birth, so well your parts you bore
that you deserved a birth entirely free.

MARCELLUS, SON OF MARCELLUS, GRAMMARIAN OF NARBONNE

A word, Marcellus. You began distressed,
from home and country by your mother banned.
Fortune retrieved your loss, with interest;
for Narbo proved a second native land;
Clarentius, a high-born stranger, here
was won to yield his daughter as your wife.
Your lecture-rooms were thronged from far and near,
and wealth and reputation warmed your life.

But Fate will grudge a too-successful fame,
as chiefly learn the wicked to their cost.
I but recall the facts, and add no blame.
Enough to say: one stroke, and all was lost—
except your title. That I let you hold
though with my bad grammarians enrolled.

IN MEMORY OF TWO FRIENDS

I

All you whose hearts for merriment are bred,
for sport and holiday and jesting game,
strike up a yearly dirge for one that's dead,
Leontius by name.

Lascivus was he called, although he led
a life beyond reproach. Yet no distress
he showed, because he knew the word was said
in teasing friendliness.

He gained sufficient scholarship to hold
a minor chair and there his aims he bent
among the school grammarians enrolled
he felt his Heart s content
You were my constant friend when I was young
and now despite the accumulating years
kindly Leontius lovingly I ve sung
your fate with heartfelt tears
It s saddening but I feel a warm delight
in reckoning my grief my debt to you
Take my complaint my gift of words I write
the song I feel your due

II

And you Dynamius shall be sung by me
my fellow townsman in a lawyer's gown.
You spoiled your practice through adultery
and fled from scandal to Ilerda Town
But there you found a wealthy Spanish wife
you took up rhetoric and changed your name
Flavinius were you in your second life
to make your exile safe from following shame

You longed to see your home before you died
returned, yet chose Ilerda in the end
Despite the gossiping that made you hide
I ve here recalled you as my youthful friend.
From death s sure exile you ll return no more
then take my love if love can stir the dead.
Though far you lie upon an alien shore
my sorrowing song has faithful tears to shed

A SLAVE PET

Past chilly Rhine my Bissula s home is found,
where Danube springs in runnels from the ground.
Enslaved by war s harsh deed then freed for me.
her captor s masterful young pet is she
No mother s aid, no nurse s care, she knew
Under no strict control as child she grew

From knowledge of her homeland's ruin saved,
set free before she knew herself enslaved
she's bred a Roman, though she shows her race
in yellow hair, blue eyes, and German face
Two girls she seems, both beautiful and young
Rhenish in looks and Roman in her tongue

Sweetness and sport and love, delight and all that's dear and kind
my savage leaves the little Roman girls all far behind
But Bissula's an ugly name, it isn't sweet enough
She's charming with her master, but with strangers shy and rough

You'll never catch my Bissula in wax and smearing paint
Before the grace of Nature all the charms of art are faint
O take your reds and whites! For other girls they might avail,
but this complexion laughs at art Ah, painter, you must fail
unless you mix the Punic rose with lilies and then trace,
before the colour sparkles out, the contours of her face

THE SORT OF GIRL HE PREFERS

Here's the mistress that I choose
Careless brawls she won't refuse,
and bawdy words she'll often use,
lovely, lively, loose in act,
she'll smack and let herself be smacked,
and smacked will snuggle to a kiss
But if she's not all like this
and lives a chastely straightened life—
I tremble she will be my wife

ON SCRIBE PERGAMUS, A SLAVE WHO VAINLY FLED

Slow Pergamus you always were a dunce,
and then you ran but you were caught at once
So now your lettered brow beneath the brand
endures the task neglected by your hand

TO THE NYMPHS PURSUING HYLAS

Nymphs, wanton out your hour
Your cruel love has no power
This lad shall be a flower

I

I had crossed quick Nava with its cloudy torrent
and gazed on recent ramparts round old Vincum
where Gaul once equalled Rome's defeat at Cannae
and unwept untended the corpses littered the fields
Then on through trackless woodland I went alone
and met no mark of human handiwork.
I passed Dumnissus sweltering in dried up earth
and Tabarnae fed by an unfaltering spring
and lands shared lately among Sarmatian settlers
At last, sheer on the Belgic bounds, I noted
Noiomagus, Camp of godded Constantine

Clearer this plain air Now the sun opens
a cloudless sky rich pulsed with serene light
No longer is heaven to seek in a branch tangle,
closed in a green gloom, but the free breath
of lucid day gives fully to the eyes
a glory of sun and dazzle-depths of gold
Ah in that prospect I saw my native land,
the gracious Bordeaux country, sleekly tilled,
villa roofs perched on overhanging banks,
hill slopes green with vines and gliding under
with a rumour of peace, delightful, the Moselle

II

Two travel ways When downstream go the boats,
the quick oars strike the waters scarred with foam
Or with unslackening tow-rope on the banks
the sailors on shoulder strain the mast bound hawser

How often you wonder at your own close windings
and think *their natural flow too slow a going!*
You with no mud sunk sedges hedge your banks
or on your brinks diffuse a stinking ooze
Dry to the water's lip the tracks all wander

iii

Through your light levels you show the depth of crystal:
river without a secret. As the air
in stillness, open, spreads across our eyes
and the winds, becalmed, draw all the veils of space,
deep in your gulf we gaze, and spy below
wealth of whelmed things, your hidden rooms revealed.
The stream runs gently and with a limpid lapse
shows in an azure light the scattered shapes:
the furrowed sand which the slight movement ripples,
bowed water-grasses in your green bed trembling.
Under the stream that bred them, the tossing weeds
endure the buffets of water. Pebbles glint
and fade, and gravel frames green drifts of moss.

As a Briton beholds the Caledonian shore
spread open at tide-ebb, the thick seaweed-green,
red coral and whitening pearls, the seed of shells,
man's greedy delight, and under enriched waves
necklaces (it seems) counterfeit our fashions.
So under the merry waves of the placid Moselle
plants various-hued show up the scattered stones.

Yet eyes, fixed on the depths, grow weary watching
the fish playing between, in sliddery shoals,
the many sorts, the slanted swimming courses,
the regular line going up against the current.

iv

The scaly Chub glitters in weedy sands,
most tender-fleshed and packed with mesh of bones,
spoiling when caught in six hours' time. The Trout
whose back's bestarred with purplish spots. The Roach
whose bones won't needle and hurt. The Grayling, too,
who, with swift dart, glides lightly out of sight.
And you, harassed in crooked Saar's big gorges
(where at six craggy piers its entries fret),
when you've been swept down to a greater stream,
Barbel, more amply you move in easy waters.

Who doesn't know *that comfort of the commons*,
green Trench, or Bleak, the prey of angling boys?
Shad, crackling on the hearth, the people's food,
or you halfway between two species, Trout
and Salmon, and *yet neither, vaguely blurred*
between the pair, hooked midway in your life?
Gudgeon some two-palms-wide (with thumbs omitted),
fattish and round, and bulkiest when with spawn,
you Gudgeon whiskered like the tufted Barbel,
you also must be named in the river squads

And you, a surface-pasturer, great Sheatfish,
whose back glistens as if with olive-oil
I call you River Dolphin, so large you slide
and scarcely extend full length your body's column
hampered by shallows and by water-weeds

vi

Let a vineyard show bring on another pageant
and the gifts of Bacchus catch our wandering gaze,
where a tall ridge, stretching above scarped hills,
spur and sun slope salient and re-entrant,
rise in a natural theatre draped with vines

So the fostering vintage hangs the crest of Gaurus,
and Rhodope, and gleam on the Pangaean
So Ismarus slopes green to the Thracian sea
So my own vines tint yellowing Garonne

From ridge top to the shelving foot, the banks
are planted richly with green vines The folk,
happy at work, and the busy share farmers,
now high against the sky, now on the slope
vie with coarse shouts The traveller, who tramps
the flat banks, and the bargeman drifting past
chant backchat at slow workers till the noise
rings on the hills, the shaken woods, the channels

Yon sight's for free delight The stream, with blue,
mirrors the shady hill Vine shoots and leaves
show tangled growing in the water Look,
what river-hues, when eve drives lazy shadows
and spreads the green of the reflected light
Whole hills float in the ripples Distant tendrils
shake here, and here the clusters ripely-glassed

The cheated boatman counts the gleaming vines
His boat is drifting out across the waters,
midstream, where imaged hill and river blend
and river mingles with the edge of shadows

And how delightful the show when oared skiffs
stage a mockbattle in mid current Winding
in, out, they graze against the fresh burst grass
where turf's been cropped along the banks of green
The peasant, standing on the rise, watches
the agile owners springing, stern and bow,
the gay lads straggling on the spread of waters,
and lets the day slip past Absorbed in smiling,
he puts the games before his serious job

viii

Eager to make a show of braided hair
(it's when the nurse has first put near her darling
the glistening marvel of the staring mirror)
the chuckling girl child loves the odd device
and thinks she spies another sister girl,
gives the bright metal unreturning kisses,
plucks the unyielding hairpins, on the brow
rubs with her finger the untousled curls
So boat-lads have their game with dodging shadows
and sport with shapes that blur from false to true

I'll tell of towns where silent you slip under,
and strongholds watching you from ancient walls.
I'll tell of forts upraised in perilous years
now granaries of the quiet Belgic farmers
I'll tell of happy settlers on either bank,
and how your waters part the prosperous fields,
lapping between the labours of men and oxen

3

FIRST CHRISTIAN POETS (A.D. 350–400)

1. *Beginnings.* In the Introduction I have made a few remarks on the Christian attitude to Graeco-Roman culture. With Clement and Origen, Greek philosophy flowed into the Eastern Church; and in the West the secular forms of rhetoric, from Tertullian onwards, invaded all attempts to state a Christian attitude. An ambivalent emotion shows through the statements of the Christian's relation to culture—to the rhetoric which was the only imaginable basis of civilisation. The problem grew acuter as the Church had to formulate its relation to the State. However evil the lure of culture might seem, the slow remorseless pressures of adaptation brought more and more culture into the Christian area.

The earliest extant works by Christians in verse show the two opposed tendencies. Juvencus, a priest of Spain, about 330, retold the four books of the Evangelists in hexameters.[1] His work is a smooth, monotonous narrative in Vergilian diction, and seeks to respectabilise the Gospels by putting them in a cultured idiom—to harmonise Vergil and the Evangelists, so that cultured people would not be repelled, as they were by such work as the accentual hexameters of Commodianus. Jerome says of Juvencus: "he was not afraid to submit the majesty of the Gospels to the laws of metre." (Early in the fifth century Lactantius still complains that the educated disdain the Scriptures and that "the prophets have spoken with a common and simple speech as to the people." The lordly and wise, he says, only credit divinity with cosmetics on.[2]) On the other hand, S. Hilary of Poitiers retold the Gospel story in popular form, in the trochaics of the marching song which we have met in the Vigil of Venus.

Let the host of brethren hymn the tale, O let them loudly sing
Let them utter forth the praises that we owe to Christ the King.

Baldly the story is recounted

All the Children of the Land he slays till martyrs throng the skies
To the Nile the Mother s riding to escape the searching eyes
Written down are various facts though some are lost but crowds declare

It ends

Through the world to preach he sends them still baptising everyone
all who call upon the Father s name acknowledging the Son
all believers (runs the mystic message) unctioned with the Holy Breath
made the Sons of God to drink the Source newborn and know no death

This song was too severely theological to survive against the simpler hymns that Ambrose and others were to write, but it must have had a strong effect for a while, since it was the one foreign element which managed to migrate into the hymnology of the early Irish Church Its success must have been due to its use of the popular marchbeat It thus links with *The Vigil of Venus*, probably written somewhere about the same time, in which a self consciously pagan attitude is stated

2 *Proba* Ausonius, it was mentioned, wrote a cento of Virgilian tags on the marriage of the Emperor Valentinian—that is, a poem made entirely up of quotations from Vergil Proba whose husband was Prefect of Rome in 351 and who belonged to a rich and important family, also wrote a cento—a kind of epitome of the stories of Old and New Testaments made up out of Vergilian tags, lines and half lines In her Prologue she mentions that she had previously written a poem on the civil wars But now "I'll show that Vergil sang Christ's gentle gifts' The work of tortuous ingenuity extends to almost 700 lines She ends with an appeal to her friends and "sweet spouse" to keep to the Christian faith, and a hope that their grandsons will follow their example This does not suggest that the faith was very strongly held if held at all, in Proba's family

Jerome presumably had Proba in his thought when he wrote with his wonted acerbity "The art of interpreting Scripture is one that all claim Educated and uneducated we all write poems everywhere This the voluble old woman, the drivelling dotard etc, lay claim to, mutilate and teach before they learn . . As if we have not read the centos from Homer and Vergil, and

could not say Vergil was a Christian before Christ, when he wrote *Iam redit et virgo*, etc. . . . This is puerile." Isidore is milder: "If we do not admire her conception, we praise her ingenuity, and her work is still read among the apocryphal writings"—for Pope Gelasius had listed it there in a decree between 492 and 496, and so the Middle Ages read it. We happen to have the inscription which Proba's husband put on her tomb: "Clodius Adolphus Vir Clarissimus Ex-Prefect of the City, to his Incomparable Wife and Himself."[3]

3 *Paulinus of Nola*. Pontius Meropius Anicius Paulinus was a native of Bordeaux, born of a wealthy and noble family.[4] He was trained by Ausonius, and at the outset did his best to fit into the scheme of things which his master set forth He versified a work by Suetonius and sent it to Ausonius He left a brilliant reputation behind him in the Schools, and went out into an administrative career He became Consul, then Governor of Campania before his thirtieth year, he married a rich heiress, Therasia. Then he and his wife went to their estates in Spain, and lived a retired life Ausonius suspected an estrangement and tried to coax him to break his silence, he used all the devices of the Schools to re-establish contact "Even enemies cry out Hullo in battle Rocks and caves are not so rude as to refuse to echo the human voice Sea cliffs rumble, rivers murmur . ." Everything answers to the right gesture Cymbals, the floor under the feet of dancers, drumskin, sistra and other religious instruments, etc Why not then poet to poet, friend to friend? And so on Bring him back to the fold of the faithful, you Muses, etc.

Paulinus replied with the poem *Four Summers*, which I give among the translations He was too moved to reply in prose Perhaps, he felt, it would be possible to make Ausonius understand if the explanation was made in verse Interesting is the way in which he repudiates the whole machinery of rhetoric—that is, existing culture He believes that he is in touch with sources of renewal which supersede all that the Schools teach an immediacy of integrative knowledge And yet, amid the struggling to express this new centre of life, the machinery of rhetoric is still active Paulinus, in order to analyse, to express, is forced to fall back on the only available analytic instrument. The worn paradoxes of

the Schools are all that he has at a pinch to utter the profound conflict of his soul Especially striking is the way in which he turns to the *money metaphor to define the new stability* which he feels must take over where the economic system of the Empire has utterly failed

Ausonius could not grasp what had happened He feels only that a friendship has broken down His father and the father of Paulinus had been friends and then he and Paulinus had been so wrapped up in the same interests Think of Pylades and *Orestes and Damon and Pythias and scores of other mythical* friendships This kind of thing doesn t happen He begs God and his Son to restore Paulinus to him He won't give up hope Some day he ll hear the voices

> Look your Paulinus is near The snowy towns
> of Spain he has left He s reached Tarbellae s fields
> He s at Hebromagus homesteads Now he s entered
> his brother s lands nearby Downstream he s coming
> Now he s in sight The stern swings in for mooring
> He s passed the crowd at the gates of his home-quay
> outstripped the people rushing along to meet him
> passed his own door and now he knocks at yours
> Is it so? or say do lovers make their dreams?

Paulinus replies He cannot respond to the coaxing charm of the old man—the date is 393 He is very hurt at the accusation of *failing a friend and he resents the way in which* Ausonius has inferred that Therasia is really the cause a strong minded wife who wants to cut her husband off from his former friends

> You taunt me with fear of my wife
> you thrust a harsh line deep into my bowels
> *Stop please this wounding of your friend*

He protests that his devotion to Ausonius is untouched he reveres him as a father *So do all his household* who are at one in this as in the worship of Christ Ausonius has listened to lies and is blaming Therasia Then he drops into a purely rhetorical contest with his master Why complain that he has refused to bear the yoke of learned studies which had linked him to Ausonius? He never bore that yoke because he was never Ausonius s equal Can you compare calf with bull horse with wild ass hazels with chestnuts etc.? The only yoke he can recognise is that of love in

which both great and humble may join. Then, leaving the forms of rhetorical exercise, in which he is sincerely protesting his affection, he bursts into the magnificent passage which I translate as *Through All the Fates*, in which the rhetorical discipline and the emotional structure are perfectly coincident. It has been suggested that this lovely farewell is deliberately couched in terms which are as much neoplatonic as Christian, so that the words, which pronounce separation, may carry as deep a uniting affirmation as possible.

There is a tale that Paulinus had had some malady of the eyes, which S. Martin miraculously cured. More likely is it that his wife was a strong-minded woman—if not quite the strong-minded woman of Ausonius's charges—and that she influenced him into a whole-hearted conversion. They had had one child; and when it died, the link with the world fell away. They left Spain and gave themselves entirely up to religion at Nola, in Campania, under the protection of their saint, Felix, to whom Paulinus had been dedicated in his youth. The people elected him their Bishop in 409; and when he died in 431, it was said that the Jews and Heathens mourned him as their father. He wrote a poem on John the Baptist, a narrative in hexameters, where many rhetorical speeches punctuate the episodes. It was easier to denounce rhetoric than to overcome it.

The story of the relations between Ausonius and Paulinus has often been told as the clearest instance of the parting of the ways in the fourth century; and indeed, we do touch a powerful cleavage of forces in those gravely exchanged letters. Each man speaks from a different world. Ausonius feels himself an honest Christian, but cannot see why his creed should prevent him from living the life of a socially responsible citizen of his world. The inherited body of culture is beyond criticism; it is itself civilisation. Paulinus feels society is rotten at the core, and that nothing can save a man except to sever all his property relations and attempt to live a life of brotherly renunciation.

> This is my fear, my task, that the Last Day
> catch me not sleeping in dark of sterile action
> spending my wasted time on meaningless cares?

He fears, he tells Ausonius, the Lightning-flash of Christ (*si Christus coruscet*). The two basic concepts fighting to own men's

souls in this failing Roman world are those of Rome's Eternity and of the Last Day—of Rome's indestructibility and of world-end And in a general way we can assert that Ausonius and Paulinus do incarnate those concepts, so that their clash is the clash of all that is deepest in their world We shall find the opposing concepts continually reappearing and one of the paradoxes of their movement is that the Christian terror of world-end, which from one angle is reactionary and tends to break down the cementing forces in society, is from another angle driving men into social activity of a new kind and positing the possibility of a new sort of society While the Roman faith in social action, which alone enables men to pull together and to carry the technique of civilisation through infinite confusions is preserving all sorts of abuses and obstructions, and is thus ensuring the downward pressures

And so, despite the unbridgeable gap between the positions of Ausonius and Paulinus, there is also common ground. That common ground lies in rhetoric, in a certain intellectual discipline and method of co-ordinations "At Nola Paulinus showed how the arts learned in the Schools could be turned to other uses He heads the long line of Christian rhetoricians who proceeded from the Schools of Gaul "[5]

4 *Prudentius of Spain* About the same time as Paulinus was absorbing the traditions of the Schools and undergoing his revulsions, a Spaniard was at work who combined something of both Ausonius and Paulinus • Aurelius Prudentius Clemens was born about 348 at Saragossa He "wept under the crackling rods of the School and rose to respected rank as a magistrate In middle age he visited Rome, where he was duly impressed by the monuments of the Christian past, the basilicas, confessions or reliquaries of martyrs, and the austere pomp of the churches Rome had already become the City of the Blood of the Martyrs as well as the Imperial Centre At the age of fifty seven it seems Prudentius looked back over his life and judged it, and asked what was to be done The answer was his poetry

It is true that when he asked that question in his fifty seventh year (in his *Preface*) he was separating himself out from his society and judging it He denounces the legal system and its basis in

rhetoric without a moral conscience. "Sinfully I lied." That is an interesting attack on rhetoric; and if we compare it with Petronius's more comprehensive and realistic attack, we see what has happened in the meantime. The humanistic realisation that culture and life have somehow slipped askew and that their centres do not coincide, has become a problem of personal conscience, of separation from society. But interesting as this comment of Prudentius's is, we must not press it too far. The moment of taking stock does not lead Prudentius to any violent separation, as it did the monastics. It reveals to him a new vision of history, of a slow transformation of secular into profane, which is what gives his polemical works their moments of grandeur, of co-ordinating insight. Caesar as well as Christ was working out God's plan; the opposition of State and Church has been a necessary contradiction from which a higher unity will arise—, in fact, has arisen. This thought is basic in Prudentius, and gives him a touch of greatness.

> Would you have me tell what cause led Roman labours
> to such a height? what glory sings Rome's name
> until the bridled world must take her road?
> People with different tongues and different cultures
> God knitted in one rule, into one empire
> subdued whatever's amenable in man,
> planned the kindly halter with the yoke of concord
> for all, that a religious love might hold
> the joined hearts The bond of Christ's not suited
> unless a united mind weaves close the peoples
> in a common social basis

Prudentius can thus return to the rhetorical system, and by using it for different aims feel that it is purified of the lie.

He is dominated by Christian imagery; he yearns towards the martyrs; he aspires to the gently ascetic life; he feels entirely submissive and dependent. But at the same time he is not in any way rent by the opposition of this side of himself to the Roman world. The day of martyrdom is over, and society must go on; he has been as dutiful a magistrate as he is a worshipper of the martyrs. In the same way, he seems unaware of any conflict between the classical forms of verse and the Christian emotions he wants to pour into them. He has a thorough love and knowledge of Seneca and Lucan, and wants to follow Juvencus's

example in converting the epic to Christian needs His hexameter poems have much energy and at times a penetrating clarity, but it is his two volumes of lyrics in which his nature most fully expresses itself, a series of hymns for the Christian's day, and a set of eulogies of martyrs The hymns were too long for liturgical use as they stood, but parts of them have held a high place in the Church's worship [7]

Prudentius is a skilful versifier His verse lacks passion, and his style lacks any rich complexity or depth But there is warmth and variety Here too we see his successful compromise of contemporary forces, he unites both popular and classical elements His verse is strictly quantitative, but he uses the trochaic marching beat, and he selects from the classical tradition metrical forms, iambic or dactylic, which suit an easy flow of music and sense rather than a structural ordonnance [8] If the reader will now reread what was said in the last chapter about the development of the trochaic tetrameter, the marching song, from Prudentius into Venantius and then on into the eleventh century and the Trobadors, he will perhaps see more clearly what I am trying to say about the vast potency of the new forces thrusting into Latin culture Prudentius represents one of the first stages of the new integration when the classical heritage is being transformed from within He represents the resolution of the interlocked struggle of Ausonius and Paulinus One of the popular elements in his verse is the melodramatic or even grotesque note which intrudes at times in his celebration of the martyrs [9]

Other verses worth noting are those in which he celebrates a vegetarian diet as an essential part of the work of overcoming division in the world (Jerome lays it down that "the eating of flesh is the seedplot of lust," and Augustine also comes down on much the same attitude) Prudentius's picture of Christian innocence has much likeness to a pagan picture of the Saturnian world before the arrival of war and money, but it has a warmer reality, since it is being actually lived out by many men and women [10]

The verses written as a preparation *Before Sleep* excellently express the spiritual condition of Prudentius The busy day of the Roman world is going to sleep for some that sleep means nightmares, but for Prudentius who holds the key to the future it

is a moment of release, of subtle exploration of the emergent forms of life in the inner depths Rhetoric is the snake of old debate, who uncoils his power at the advent of the new integration In the stanzas which begin *Wailing of the Newborn Child*, Paulinus gives his buoyant statement of faith in the powers of renewal in life, and in *O Christ Supreme* he strangely shows how indissolubly welded in his mind are the concepts of Rome's Eternity, her civilising mission, and of Christian Redemption Christ supplants Romulus but in the process he takes much of Romulus into himself It was an idea on which Prudentius had much pondered; and he elaborates it several times in his polemic *Against Symmachus* The expansion of the Empire was the preparation for Christ

> This was achieved by the great success the triumphs
> of Roman Power Christ even then was coming
> believe it and the way made ready for him

An ivory of the eighth century strikingly illustrates this outlook it shows Christ on the Cross which is planted on Golgotha, below which, as in the hollow of the pagan Lupercal, stands the Wolf suckling the Twins The Cross is supported on the foundation symbol of Rome [11]

5 *S Ambrose* Ambrose was probably born at Treves, where his father was Prefect, about 340 Educated at Rome, he became an advocate, like Prudentius His high reputation in the courts gained him an appointment as Consular Prefect, with seat at Milan The violent struggle between Catholics and Arians was at its height Intervening to secure quiet at the elections of a bishop for Milan he was himself against his will elected [12] He tried to escape, but could not Then he decided to go with whole heart into the role; he gave away all his property to the poor and adopted an ascetic way of life He was a good administrator, and a patron of monastics Augustine tells us how he took to composing hymns to ease his flock, during a siege by the Arians, in the Portian basilica at Milan in 386

> The devout people kept watch in the Church ready to die with their Bishop your servant There my mother your handmaid bearing a chief part of those anxieties and watchings lived for prayer We yet unwarmed by the heat of your Spirit still were stirred up by the sight of the amazed and disquieted city Then it was first instituted that after the manner of the

Eastern Churches Hymns and Psalms should be sung lest the people should wax faint through the tediousness of sorrow and from that day to this the custom is retained divers yea almost all your congregations throughout other parts of the world following herein (*Conf* IX vii 15)

By the words "after the manner of the Eastern Churches" Augustine means only that Ambrose took from the East the idea of antiphonal singing and the composition of short measured lyrical hymns (Greek hymns never reached regular metrical form They were the accentual successors of the choric ode of Greek drama[13])

These hymns of Ambrose, though strictly quantitative, fall into four lined stanzas for singing by alternate groups and the need of simplicity means that each line tends to have a certain completeness about it Even more than in Prudentius, a chanting flow is breaking down the old tensions of structure The fact that these hymns could be sung right on for centuries and fit into a world where iambic dimeters have developed in a rhythmical scheme with rhymes is a proof that the dynamic element in them links rather with the metrical stresses of the future than with the quantities of the past[14] Similarly with their style Parts have a mechanical balance of phrase, and a dry diction; others show the way in which "the Christian idea was making rhetoric its material for the creation of something new and beautiful'

Sheer Splendour of the Father s might
Light out of Light delivering
O Light of Light and fiery fount
O Day illuminating Day

The hymn I translate was written at the time of the watches in the Basilica Relics of two saints were supposed to have been found the Arians accused them of being fakes, the relics were vindicated by an alleged miraculous cure

He is a well known man when in health was employed by the public services by name Severus a butcher He says aloud that when he touched the hem of the garment of the martyrs wherewith the sacred reliques are covered, *his s ght was restored* Is not this like what we read in the Gospel? Their obstinacy is more detestable than that of the Jews

So argued Ambrose in a sermon at the time[15]

6. *Sedulius.* As an example of the iambic hymns that followed, I give some stanzas by one Sedulius, who may have been Spanish or Italian, and who spent part of his life in Achaia.[16]

S. PAULINUS

TO AUSONIUS

Four summers have been sickled sturdily,
four winter-earths with grey of frost been smitten,
since any word of yours encountered me,
since I beheld a letter you had written.
But now your sheet has brought me, multiplied
to save my life, the blessing long-denied.

A triple letter, flowering to please
with varied play of thought and singing sound:
a sweetness somewhat tart with changing pleas,
a troubled love grown critical, I found.
The father's smile beguiled the critic's rage;
to balance rigour, kindness I extracted.
Sir, with your charges later I'll engage
in fitter metre, stating how I've acted.
But first with lighter lines I'll have a try
and pay my debt of song unfaltering.
Here *hail* my elegiac verses cry;
they've broken silence: now let others sing.

Why, father, send to me the banished Muses?
Why bid me rise and follow?
The cloistered heart, that's vowed to Christ, refuses
the Nine and their Apollo.
Once we were both harmoniously enthralled
(your powers outstripping mine):
the deaf Apollo from his cave we called;
we thought the Muse divine;
in love with song we sought from groves and hills
the gift the god bestowed.
A different force, a greater god, now fills
my heart: a different mode

of life He asks He claims the life He gave,
to make us live for Him
All sport or social work is vain to save,
all literary whim
His word forbids, that we may take His law
and view its heavenly beams
which philosophic craft but serves to flaw,
rhetoric, poet's dreams,
that steep the heart in lying vanities
and teach us word-control,
but have no shred of truth to bring us ease,
no truth to save the soul

What truth or goodness can they own unless
the God supreme they own
the spring whence truth and goodness come to bless,
except in Christ, unknown?
He is the light of truth, the way, the force,
the Father's hand and power,
the sun of righteousness, creative source,
the child of God the flower,
the death of death, who saves mortality
The lord of worth on high,
our God became a Man for us, that He
might raise us to the sky
and mingle man and god in endless love,
Himself expressing each
So, when He sends His glory from above
to cherish and to teach,
He wipes the slothful body clean, renews
the heart once filled with mire,
and gives a chaste delight that never sues
for offal of desire
Therefore He claims a master's right; He's caught
our hearts our days our aims
our faith our will our every wish and thought,
our fear and love, He claims

The aimless surge that storms about our lives
in toils to which we're born,
ends when the faith in life-beyond arrives.
Good things we do not scorn
as things profane in use and cheaply vile;
we bank them, I protest,
to grow more valuable in Christ awhile—
He's promised interest
on things despised or (rather) merely placed
in usury to-day.
A banker, free from craft and stably based,
a vaster sum He'll pay;
He'll give us back increased, at death's recall,
the money we have spurned.
Waiting or serving, I have given my all:
to Christ I've wholly turned.
Then do not think me worthless or unstirred
or weak in love; for how
could any Christian fail in *love*? The word
acquires new meaning now.

TO AUSONIUS

Through all the fates of earth, through every spell
that works on man its spleen,
while I am bolted in the body's cell,
though worlds should come between,
I hold you mine, entwined in every part—
not dim, with distant face.
Clasping you close, I see you in my heart,
here and in every place;
and when, set free, I go another quest
and pay no more earth's toll,
wherever God, our Father, bids me rest,
still you shall share my soul
O there's no end of love, we'll safely find,
when there's an end of earth.
The mind survives the wreck of flesh, the mind
from heaven had its birth.

The sense is quick, the emotion prospers yet,
eternal in the sky
The soul would die if it could once forget,
and, friend, it cannot die

SONG FOR THE DAY OF S FELIX

Spring opens the voice of the birds But for me
my Saint's Day is my Spring, and in its light
winter flowers for the merry people Outside,
the dark cold and the season of mid frost
hold sway, and time is curdled on white earth
yet with that dawn religious laughter builds us
a nook of Spring Grief leaves the victorious heart,
that winter of the soul the saddening clouds
scud from the mind's serene
The gentle swallow
knows the friendly days the harmonious doves
the white bird with black wings, all know, and sing
only when Spring is heard in the thorn thickets
Songless they flit among the shaggy hedges
till Spring returns and wakes them with delight
to songs as various as their glistening wings

So I too know the day which, year by year,
is gay and holy with S Felix' Feast
Now the sweet Spring of my happy year returns,
now glad I pay my vows with lifted voice
and break in a new song

PRUDENTIUS

PREFACE

Many long wheeling years have spun
round me to bring this fifty-seventh one
(unless I err) which gives me joy in the encircling sun
I reach the ending of the ways,
on age's bound my guided life now strays—

What profit have I found in all that granted length of days?
  Beneath the birch, a child, I cried,
  then manhood's gown I donned, and gladly plied
the lawyer's trade to plead with lies Yes, sinfully I lied
  Then rebel youth, that loves to flirt
  with wanton pleasures (how the memories hurt)
defiled me with its sullying lures of shameful gutter-dirt
  The law disputes gave edge in me
  to vaunting wits, and, working stubbornly,
in spite of many a bitter blow I fought for victory.
  What gain can we expect to find
  in earthly fortunes well or ill designed?
Whatever state it was we held death sees it left behind.
  Then shall I hear, "The world you sought,
  whoever you may be, is now a naught
not God's were all the things you chased, and now in God you're caught!"
  Yet, at death's barrier loitering,
  may I, a sinner with no merits, fling
the garment of my folly off and learn at least to sing!
  to link my days with hymns, at night
  hymning to bridge the darkness with delight,
to spread the Catholic Faith, against all heresies to fight,
  on Gentile rites to tread to break
  your idols, Rome, and let my verses wake
praise of Apostles dead and martyrs for the Church's sake
  While thus I write my psalmody,
  strike off the fetters of my flesh from me—
then, following my last breath of song, I'll flash to Heaven, free.

CHRIST AS ROMULUS

O Christ supreme, the One on High,
Splendour of God and Power unbounded,
Creator of the Earth and Sky,
these city-walls you also founded

Clear on the crest of things you reared
the Roman Throne beyond all harms—
that Rome should always be revered
when gowned for peace or fierce with arms,

and people differing in their ways,
their tongues and values, creeds and rites,
should now discover in your praise
the law that governs and unites

HYMN BEFORE FOOD

Creator of Light and Cross-bearing Son,
born from a Maid and begot by the Word,
joined with the Father as manifest One
ere, as the stream of divinity stirred,
earth and the sea and the stars were begun—
show us Salvation, O show us your Face
bright with the sweetness for which we all pray,
peaceful and shrined in a luminous ray,
bless with your presence our meeting to-day,
giving our table a genuine grace
Nothing without you is sweet, as we know,
food cannot satisfy, all is in vain
Hungry and thirsty we sadly remain
Lord, if Your favour you fail to bestow—
faith be the sanctification we show!
God be the savour we taste as we feed,
Christ be the liquid that pours at our need!
Still may the Trinity govern our aims,
jesting or serious converse, or games,
all that we are, every thought, every deed
Here are no spoils of the profligate rose,
unguents aren't used to make fragrant our board,
though an ambrosia ceaselessly flows
Faith is the bountiful nectar that's poured
straight on our lips from the breast of the Lord
Scorn, O my Muse, all the ivy's light leaves
which in the past you have wound on your brow
Mystic the wreath which my rhythm now weaves,
garlanding verses in proof of my vow
Christ's is the praise that encircles me now

Grateful I sing. O what course is more right?
  How may the spirit, that child of the light,
  better express its own birthright of joy?
  All of my powers I gladly employ,
  singing my Maker and praising His might.

All that exists at man's mercy He laid,
  lords are we men of His bounty displayed.
  All that the earth or the air or the sea
  bring from their wombs, He has made; and He made
  me for Himself and the others for me.

Carefully, craftily fowlers prepare
  nets for the fluttering birds, or a snare.
  Osier-twigs are the deadliest things,
  smeared with the lime that entangles the
  never again to go free through the air.

Look where the sliddering fishes now meet
  sinuous nets that the fishermen draw.
  Others are victims of dangled deceit,
  lured by the rod in their hurry to eat;
  snatching the bait, they are hooked in the jaw.

Corn is arising to flood all the ground
  gold with the wealth of its native increase.
  Vines are seen trailing and climbing around,
  lush in the vineyards The nursling of peace,
  green with its fruitage, the olive is found.

These are the riches with which we're supplied,
  Christ the purveyor of all we require.
  Far may all lust of the belly abide,
  slaughtering oxen in heaps to provide
  courses of blood, an unholy desire.

Leave to the savage and ravening brood
  banquets on corpses of four-footed beasts
  Lettuce and bean are our natural food,
  various salads; no blood may intrude
  spoiling our innocent pastoral feasts.

Buckets of milk! How they bubble and steam,
warm from the udders and snowily fresh.
Poured into thickening churns goes the stream,
foaming and whirling, while, parted, the cream
turns into cheese in the wickerwork-mesh
Clean with its sweetness, now honey I see,
shed from the comb as my nectarous fare
Worked and infused by the artisan bee,
wedlock he scorns, and he gathers for me
thyme's dainty essence and dews of the air.
Orchards are drooping with fruit overhead,
ripening brightly to feed us again
Down from the trees, as they're shaken, are shed
apples in hundred, a bountiful rain,
scattered in piles of delectable red.
Earth has no trumpet, no lyre of the past,
famous for music, that fitly could raise
strains of sufficiently rapturous praise,
thanking our God for the largess He's cast,
He the Omnipotent, over our days

BEFORE SLEEP

Father, be with us still,
unseen, supreme above!
Christ who revealed His will!
and you the Breath of Love
O Trinity, still blending
one light, one power blent,
you God from God unending,
each from the other sent!
The toil of day flows past,
the light peacefully dims,
and gentle sleep at last
relaxes weary limbs
Though racked with violent pains
and wounded with distress,
deeply the spirit drains
wine of forgetfulness

Waters of Lethe wind
  through every vein, and then
  no grief disturbs the mind,
  and soothed are suffering men.

God made a kindly law
  for limbs so quickly spent;
  out of our toil we draw
  a sweet medicament.

But while the languors creep
  tenderly through our veins,
  deep in the dews of sleep
  festive the heart remains.

Wildly the self escapes
  to rove in vigorous ease
  and see in many shapes
  the hidden mysteries.

The soul, when freed from care,
  goes homing to the sky.
  Born from that crystal air,
  idle it cannot lie.

Infinite forms it makes
  in self-delighting play,
  and through them quickly takes
  its glad and delicate way.

But various are the dreams
  that see us sweat with dread.
  At times a Splendour gleams
  and shows the future spread.

More often dreams are blind:
  the lying image scares
  the man whose sorrowful mind
  is caught in darkening snares.

For him who meets the night
  with heart composed and clean,
  glimmering in placid light,
  the secret things are seen.

But if a man is ruled
darkly by villainies,
with crowding fears he's fooled,
a ghastly brood he sees

How deep the secrets go
that Christ in dream brings near
for righteous men They glow
unutterably clear.

The hero-saint can soar
as slumbrous earth grows faint
unfolding all its store,
Heaven welcomes home the saint.

But we who daily fail
must leave so high an aim.
Taking an earthly trail,
no high desires we claim.

Enough, if tired we rest
under sleep's cloudless skies
Enough if we are blest
from ghosts with evil eyes

Lover of God, in bed
recall the font, your vow,
your bowed baptismal head,
your oil anointed brow.

Chaste to your sleeping-place
you drowsily decline
on heart and forehead trace
at once the saving sign

All sin the Cross dispels,
the Cross makes darkness fade
The mind, protected, quells
the flux that terror made

Away, you dreams that rise
swarming at midnight hours!
Away, you Lord of Lies,
with all your treacherous powers!

You Snake of old debate,
that use a hundred arts,
and coiling frauds of hate
to vex our peaceful heart,

Hence! for our Christ is here,
our Christ is here! then go!
That sign you know and fear
it hurled your horde below

The tired body may fall,
fatigue may whelm it deep
the heart will yet recall
Christ in the depths of sleep

THE SHRINE OF S EULALIA AT MERIDA

Here is the tomb where her relics yet lie,
Merida, built by Vettonians, where
Ana that notable river runs by
eddying greenly to wash with a sigh
ramparts that lovelily lift in the air

Marble has housed her with tenderest glow,
brightly the walls of her sepulchre show
stone from far quarries and stone quarried near
Honoured and holy her ashes are here,
Earth has them safe in the breast we revere

Glittering ceilings aloft you behold,
fretted with panels of reddening gold,
rocks of all sizes have littered the ground
flowers so richly contrasted abound
meadows of roses you find all around

Gather the violets purple in hue,
bring her the blood tinctured crocuses too
Winter is smiling with flowering hours,
frost in the meadows has melted to dew
bidding us fill up our baskets with flowers

Carry along then, you maiden and boy,
  flowers with tresses of leaves to the shrine
  Only from Song come the blossoms I twine,
  look at these garlanded verses of mine,
  poor withered things, and yet gathered with joy

Thus we should worship her bones in this place,
  knelt at the altar constructed above,
  under God's feet, she with favouring face
  sends on her people the gifts of her grace
  cherishing all with the song of her love

CHRIST AS THE NEW YEAR

Wailing of the newborn child
  proclaims the spring to earth and sky
  Now the world, reborn, has smiled,
  with ugly winter-rags laid by

Child, the deserts waken now
  with flowers welcoming your birth
  Obdurate boulders learn to bow,
  and grass has clad the ribs of earth

Honey spilt from crags we see
  The leafless ilex tree appears
  wet with attar preciously,
  the tamarisk sheds balsam tears

HYMN FOR THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

O cease to count the bitter cost,
  and mothers leave to weep and brood
  Let no one sob for pledges lost
  in death this life will be renewed

Thus, the dry seed in time will sprout
  though dead and buried in the earth
  deep from the sod it rises out
  and last year's corn find second birth

Earth, open your conceiving breast
and gently take the load we bring.
Here we confide and lay to rest
a piece of life once flourishing—

Once, quick from breathing God, its frame
as dwelling for the soul sufficed,
and through it yearned a living flame,
the wisdom given us by Christ.

Earth, hide this body deep, we sue,
till duly He, in power arrayed,
recalls to life the creature who
was darkly in His image made.

Soon dawns the day that damns or saves,
when God will make our hopes come true
and you must yield from opening graves
the very limbs consigned to you.

Though rotted with decay and rust
the bones have flaked and ashed away
to little heaps of drying dust
or handfuls of unvalued clay—

though crumbling bodies leave no trace,
up-whirled by wandering winds, decoyed
into the empty vast of space,
man may not wholly be destroyed.

Yet, till God bids decay to cease
and shapes the unstable flesh again,
in what far land of perfect peace
will souls in purity remain?

In Abraham's bosom still they dwell,
where in a world of flowers at ease
lies Lazarus whom, from distant hell,
burning and envious Dives sees.

We trust your words, O Crucified,
when, conquering gloomy death, you said
to him, the robber, at your side:
"You in my footsteps too shall tread."

See, for the faithful now await
the shining paths of Paradise.
Man may approach that garden-gate
forbidden through the Serpent's lies
O guide him lest he goes amiss,
if piously his life was spent.
Give him the seminal seat of bliss
lost through his earthly banishment
But we shall cherish here our dead
with leaves and violets freshly blown,
and dripping perfumes we shall shed
upon the graveyard's chilly stone

JUDGMENTS

i

Man is God s Mirror.

ii

Justice is where the needy are always, Honesty
is a poor man.

iii

what use is Christ unless he raises me?
How can he free the fallen if he disdains
the burden of flesh, shrinks from his own handiwork?

iv

Between the lord of life and death's master
man stands God calls The Tyrant calls And still
man stands wavering, with a doubling will

S AMBROSE

ON THE DISCOVERY OF SOME RELICS AT MILAN

O Jesus, further gifts you bring,
and further thanks I gladly sing
because through me were given us
Protasius, Gervasius

The holy victims deep were placed,
but still the sacred spring was traced,
for hidden blood in time will cry
aloud to God who hears on high.

Clear from the heavens, a shaft of grace
revealed the sacred burial-place.
Martyrdoms now we may not feel,
but martyrdoms we yet reveal.

No one need ask who testifies
when faith is proven by the eyes.
The martyrs showed their powers abroad
in one who had his wits restored;

and in a blind man's cure we read
the merits of the blessed dead.
Now to Severus I refer,
a public-service officer.

He touched the martyrs and he pressed
on clouded eyes a saintly vest.
At once returned the gleam of sight
and beaten blindness took to flight.

Freed from the dragon's winding coils
that shackle us within their toils,
gathered from far and near, the crowd
went home again with thanks avowed.

We've seen revived the Church's past,
our girdles on the martyrs cast,
and sufferers cured of all their pains
by touch and power of these remains.

SEDULIUS

Come, with sweet hymns let us tell
how his power has humbled hell,
Christ has gained the victory:
He, being sold, has bought us free.

The One God beneath his heel
trod the envious dragon's zeal,
trod the evil lion's face,
then home went to a heavenly place

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8 *Asceticism* All the mystery religions of antiquity, under the pressure of increasing social division and conflict, were capable of breeding intense ascetic impulses "Christianity recognised that if it adopted asceticism it must surpass the pagans in their excesses and discomforts The devotion of the Isiac devotee crawling on bleeding knees to break the ice in winter and bathe in the icy waters the self flagellation of the Galli, the gashing with knives, the long fasts, the monastic life, the insensibility to pain and such excesses as sometimes issued in the death of the penitent must be surpassed If the Phrygian priest offered his virility to his Lord, Origen inflicted upon himself a similar emasculation "[17] For centuries before Christianity, pilgrimages to saviour shrines penance, confession, and purgatorial rites had been increasingly invading the pagan world [18]

The sense of sin, the desperate effort to build up ritually a safe universe was no Christian prerogative Proclus of Lycia, the pagan philosopher of the fifth century, prayed thrice a day to Helios, he was cured of a disease by Asklepios and made him the object of his devotion as Christians were to make saints who cured them ' Like some medieval solitaries, he has a torturing consciousness of sin and cried to Helios, like an Egyptian hermit, against the demons that assault the soul Like some of the Christian Fathers in an extreme mood, he has no use for any learning that does not make for edification Books lead to error and perplexity Proclus would willingly put them all out of reach except the Chaldaean oracles and the Timaeus Oppressed by the sense of sin, living in a disordered world of demonology and magic, he represents to the full that orientalisation of Western thought out of which the outlook of the succeeding centuries was largely made "[19]

Not till the year 385 did the Christian Church make a definite ruling about the celibacy of the clergy S Athanasius arguing against the qualms of an Egyptian monk who had been elected

bishop, insisted, "Many bishops have not contracted matrimony, while, on the other hand, monks have become fathers. Again, we see bishops who have children, and monks who take no thought of having posterity." S. Gregory of Naziansum tells how his father begot him and another son after becoming bishop: his mother Nonna prayed for a son, saw him in a prophetic vision and devoted him before birth to the service of God—all this while she was the bishop's wife. The struggle to impose celibacy was long and unequal, and indeed in England it raged well into the medieval period.

Nor did the triumph of the ascetic ideal come about without resistance. Of the leaders of the fight against it we know best Bonosus, Jovinius and Vigilantius. Bonosus, Bishop of Sordica, denied the perpetual virginity of the Virgin, citing the support of Tertullian and Photinus. Pope Siricus and the Council of Capua (389) denounced him, and S. Jerome refuted him with his best abuse. Still the Bosoniacs survived. Early in the fifth century we find them on the eastern side of the Adriatic. The Councils of Arles and Orléans (443 and 538) in France dealt with them. They reached Arabia and Ireland—being the only heretics mentioned by name in a canon of the Penitential of S. Columban.

Jovinian attacked the efficacy of celibacy Condemned at Rome, he retired to Milan. There S. Ambrose held a synod against him. Jovinian then wandered about the countryside with ardent followers. Jerome abused him as a monster of licentiousness who held that all things were permitted to the baptised in Christ (though the more scrupulous S. Augustine admitted Jovinian's sobriety). At length Jovinian ventured back to Rome, and in 412 held open meetings, which led to several girls under vow of virginity getting married. So Jovinian was scourged with a leaded thong and exiled to a rock on the Dalmatian coast. His followers were hunted down, deported, scattered among the wild islands of the Adriatic.[20]

Vigilantius was a shepherd lad of the Pyrannean valleys. Slave to the rich and talented S. Sulpicius Severus, he attracted attention and was well educated and set free. He became priest of his native Calagurris; but Sulpicius sent him with letters to Paulinus at Nola and Jerome at Bethlehem. He quarrelled with Jerome and went on to Egypt, where the hordes of anchorites were in

violent strife over the question of Origenism. Returning to Italy, he met in Milan the tenets of Jovinian and was converted. He not only denied celibacy's magical virtue, but declared it a festering source of impurity. He attacked fasts and macerations, the veneration of relics, candles and incense round the shrines, prayers to the dead. He explained the miracles done at the altars of the saints as the work of demons.

His ideas had a sweeping success in Gaul, moving from south to north. Even his old master, S. Sulpicius, and the Bishop of Toulouse, S. Exuperius, were inclined to support him. The creed spread into Spain. Pope Innocent took action, and Jerome once more let loose all his virulent abuse and distortion. But before the matter could go much further, the Alans and Vandals burst in on Gaul. Sulpicius and Exuperius, afraid of the Pope's attacks abandoned Vigilantius, and the sect faded out in the confusions of the barbarian invasion. The ascetic ideal had won.[21]

In the increasing uncertainties of the fourth and fifth centuries the monastic ideal invaded the West, mainly from Egypt. Thus, the famous monastic school of Lerins off South France was of an Egyptian origin. All that was most baffled in men and women, all that turned away from the existing hopeless contradictions and desired a harmony which that world could not give, fed the monastic movement. Sex was the supreme enemy, because it tied a person to the world—tied him to social responsibilities and made him compromise. In the *Life of Antony*, that most successful of all the tracts against the world, among the temptations of the Devil is listed the memory of one's family. S. Augustine said that against the good of marriage must be set the evil of sexual contact, which, while perpetuating the species, perpetuated original sin. The best thing men could do, he thought, was to give up marriage so that the world might quickly be brought to an end. Gregory the Great declared that the sexual relations of married people could not possibly be free from sin and that the greater mass of people could only possibly hope for salvation by entering into the strict rules of a monastery. Epiphanius said that the Church was based on virginity as on its cornerstone. S. Jerome saw no use in marriage except in so far as it provided virgins for dedication to the Lord. He writes to a girl of seventeen, Eustochium: "Will you, the spouse of God, hasten to visit the wife

of a man? Learn to have a holy pride. You are better than they." Sulpicius Severus mentions as a temptation of the Devil an impulse that sent a monk back to try to convert his wife and son.[22] Paulinus of Nola wrote a letter to a soldier who wanted to live the full Christian life: he instructed him that all the duties of citizenship and all the emotions of family life are utterly inconsistent with Christianity. The love of wife or parent or child is poisonous to the soul. The people of property are damned for ever; any soldier is a murderer, and damned. Writing to Sulpicius Severus, he congratulates him on "spewing out the burden of your patrimony like excrement" and for "preferring the Heavenly Father to an earthly parent."[23]

Melania, whose story we know from Jerome, is a good example of the ascetic creed in action at this period.[24] Highborn, she early "suffered marriage," and bore a child. Some years later her husband died, and almost immediately after two out of her three sons died as well. "I am going to tell you a thing," says Jerome, "incredible but (before Christ) true. Not a teardrop fell. She stood immovable, and, falling at Christ's feet, as she were laying hold on Him herself, she smiled. 'More easily,' she said, 'can I serve You now, O Lord, in that You have relieved me of so great a burden.' " She came to Rome with her surviving child, whom (according to Paulinus of Nola) "she slung into the bosom of Christ." Then she sailed for Jerusalem, where she stayed twenty-five years. When Jerome went east, she lived near him and Paula, another woman who "raised dry eyes to heaven and overcame love of children with love of God." Melania lived in happy asceticism—"avoiding baths and unguents, and practising fasts and filthinesses." Such was the sort of woman who excited the highest possible praise. "A woman," says Paulinus, "if so manly a Christian may be called a woman."[25]

The pagan cults, on the other hand, to some extent preserved the love of home and family. The Theodosian Code (xvi. 10, 20) forbids "the keeping of a fire in honour of the Lares, the making of libations of wine to the Penates, the lighting of lamps, the burning of incense, or the hanging of garlands round their altars." And Grenier remarks of the home deities: "They were kindly, familiar, and gay. They were the gods of a pleasant land, of a practical people, without soaring ideals, but hard-working and

essentially healthy-minded. Their worshippers hardly feared them, but they loved them and remained true to them. They offered a more effective resistance to Christianity than did Jupiter."[26]

In the fourth century it is to the semi-pagan Ausonius, returning to the pieties of the *Parentalia*, or the outspoken defender of the Altar of Victory, Symmachus, that we must look for a picture of happy family life. Symmachus has his aristocratic formalism. He addresses his son as "Your Amiability" and his daughter as "Lady Daughter", but the one warmth in his letters is for his wife and children. He remembers every birthday, is deeply anxious when his girl is sick or his granddaughter has nursery troubles, takes endless care about his son. His friend Praetextatus composed for his wife's tomb a long verse inscription, which, amid its cataloguing of virtues, does breathe a strong affection:

> Paulina in the fellowship of our bosom,
> kindling of modesty, tie of chasteness,
> pure love and faith sown in the heavens,
> sanctuary of the mind where I opened my innermost self,
> gift of the gods who twined the marriage couch
> with every affectionate and modest thread,
> a mother's love, a wife's graciousness,
> a sister's bond and a daughter's propriety . . (*C.I.L.*, vi 1779).

But as a last note on the ascetic attitudes I should like to emphasise that underlying them burns the sense of an unendurably prolonged crisis and of a hopelessly contaminated world. Prudentius, a poet without excesses, describes in his *Psychomachia*, his Holy War, which was a book widely read in the Middle Ages, how Greed—

> doffs the arms of hell and guises with fair looks
> appears a Virtue, stern of face and dress,
> whom they name Thrift and who loves careful living
> Calls Theft and Covetousness by a nice name
> Forethought for the Family.[27]

That is, he is rejecting the whole basis of Roman secular life, with its centre in the pride and fostering of the family. He is above all repudiating a world based on money and private property.

But now we must turn to the poets who strove to find reasons for participation in social activity.

4

POETS OF THE ROMAN WAY (A D 390–450)

1. *Struggle of Values* We have now covered the first phase of the struggle of values that went on as the Empire battled through the fourth century. The conformity of Ausonius and the rebellion of Paulinus meet in the tranquillising flow of Prudentius's affirmation of a new sort of life, a new sort of feeling for people. In the process the classical stereotypes are being broken up and subtly transformed Ausonius, the defender of the rhetorical tradition, finds himself showing us the faces of people in a way impossible for the classical poet, and the sense of an earth falling away penetrates into his work in the image of an earth more eagerly observed and embraced Hence his intense moments of romantically realised landscape which rise out of his anxiety to be correct in detail, literally correct Paulinus, on the other hand, has his moments of incandescent glow, in which life fades out on the pattern of Judgment and Rebirth, but which he cannot sustain with common kindliness Prudentius, metrically a fine scholar, is able to use the symbols of the new life without any obvious wrench, any intrusive conflict, his classical verse is orientated towards the rhythmical chant of early medievalism

Into this solution, then, go all the ingredients appearing in the lesser poets—the neoplatonic zeal and quest for a unifying source of life, the reviving paganism with its quickened prismatic sense of the many-coloured life of Nature the reformulation of the paradoxes of the Schools, the influx of popular elements from street-song and church hymn, the growing regional patriotism

The next phases do not admit of so neat a statement of conflict and resolution The Prudentian development was a necessary moment of relief and consolidation, but it could not suffice to solve the crisis in culture The break up of the Empire had much further to go, vast new forces were pressing in The barbarian tribes were coming in ever larger numbers over the

frontiers, and in the cracking of the shell of imperial culture all sorts of things were happening in the different regions In this chapter I shall deal with four poets who show in various ways the effort to continue what I may call the Ausonian conformity Uppermost in their minds is the image of Rome's Eternity—though in the fourth man's life the counter forces, those of the Church modify the allegiance to the State

2 *Claudian* Theodosius (382–95) pulled the Empire together and left it in apparently stable condition to his sons Arcadius and Honorius No one foresaw the heavy problems so soon to overwhelm the State The large bodies of barbarians who had crossed the border had been mostly settled with success and Goths and Vandals held high rank at the Court The barbarians were for the most part Christians before their entry into the Empire—even though they were heretical Arians On the other hand, sections of the old society were hostile to Christianity, many of the nobility clung to neoplatonism Macrobius and Eutropius in their writings almost totally ignore Christianity—Eutropius mentions it once, Macrobius avoids even an indirect reference, and writes as if a solar monotheism is the leading religious creed of his world The tradition was long established Appuleius in *The Golden Ass* which in one sense is a work of pagan apologetics, makes only one indirect scurrilous reference to Christianity and Dion Cassius spoke only of Jewish superstitions" We have evidence that literary folk made a cult of despising the bad style of Christian writers Lactantius tells us how the educated sneered at Cyprian and called him Coprian (*copros* means excrement") Panegyrics addressed to the Emperors give not the least suggestion of a change of religion [1]

The most astounding case is the work of the poet Claudianus, who dominated the literary scene at Rome at the close of the fourth century He flatly ignores Christianity, except in one slight and mocking epigram, *To Jacob* [2] He writes as if the old gods yet ruled the world and yet he is the court poet of the family of emperors who did the main work of suppressing paganism He exalts the Altar of Victory at the time when that Altar was symbol of the anti Christians the party of the nobles for whom Symmachus had been spokesman The debate over the removal

of the Altar from the Senate had been the last open struggle of the pagan party.[3]

Claudius Claudianus came from Alexandria, and seems to have been an Oriental Greek. It has been suggested that the purity of his Latin style came from the fact that he learned his Latin at a late age direct from the classics.[4] Certainly Greek was his native tongue, and he first wrote in it. During the years 395–404 he was in Italy, where he rapidly came to the fore as a political poet. His patron was Stilicho, the Vandal general in the imperial service. I have no space to go into the details of those troubled years when the pretence that the Empire could maintain its borders was broken down. One point that concerns us, however, is the way in which the collapsing imperial system had developed two focal points—Rome and Byzantium—with a brother-emperor in each of them. Arcadius had the East, and his prime minister was a eunuch named Rufinus, who, when Stilicho was about to attack Alaric and the Visigoths in Thessaly, withdrew his troops. The partisans of Stilicho accused him of treachery, and Claudian wrote a ferocious satire in two books, of which I give a substantial piece in translation. The sustained vigour of denunciation is without parallel in all Latin verse; it has something of the fury of Catullus's attacks on Caesar, but at a biting narrative length, with wealth of realistic detail, which brings it closer in some ways to the prose of Cicero at its accusing best, or that of Petronius in its choice of clearly-visualised imagery.

I give also some passages of epical description, which show how boldly Claudian tried to use the inherited epic technique to deal with contemporary matters. Here, at the close of the Empire, the poet is so far from feeling that verse forms have been outmoded that he sets about using them for the definition of the struggles of his own day.

There is a hard competence about the work of Claudian which is the last thing we associate with decadence. From any viewpoint, his work is more technically alive than that of any of the post-Vergilian poets of epic, except Lucan. And he has moments when his keen participation in events, in the strains and stresses which are rending the Empire, gives him a glancing vitality beyond anything in Lucan, where Republican enthusiasm tends to get inflated and lost in the satisfactions of a Stoical attitude

fused with rhetorical virtuosity The weakness of Claudian lies in his inability to develop any coherent epical structure to relate his ideas, his pictorial powers, his genuine passion for the Roman tradition The result is that he falls back on frigid systems of allegory and inorganically obtrusive myth figures Roma, the dominant goddess, is truly adored but cannot make herself artistically effective in the effete epical mechanism [5] The overstrained emotion leads to exaggerations—the hunted beasts welcome "the sacred wounds" that Honorius gives them—and to creaking machinery when wild beasts are wanted for Stilicho's triumph, Diana and her nymphs round them up

But when the worst is said of these political poems—where the Panegyric or Apologetic strives to break into full epical force—we have to admit that they are an extraordinary portent Here, where the Empire is breaking up on the eve of the Sack of Rome, a poet sets about refashioning the whole time honoured technique of epic narrative developed by Homer and Vergil, and applying it to the immediate turmoil of contemporary events

And in the process he may be said to beget a new form—the extension of the lampoon into a long satirical narrative involving a detailed characterisation against a broad political background

Claudian is able to do all this only because of his urgent faith in Rome and its destiny Why he is able to gain such a powerful faith at the moment when we would expect men to be hopeless is a complicated point One may say, for instance, that at the moment of impending loss we tend to become more aware of the value of that which we are about to lose That is part of the explanation, I believe, but not all As noted in the Introduction, the imperial system in its later phases, growing more impotent, became ever more philanthropic Though unable to meet the crisis squarely, it mustered its forces in certain ways and responded obliquely to the disturbing pressures To a man like Claudian strongly aware in an intuitive way of the crisis in cultural values, the need to reinforce the constructive side of the State was very stirring His faith grows in proportion to the need of faith. Thus his fierce belief in the eternality of Rome's mission (ultimately, in the cause of civilising values) was stimulated by the same complex of reasons which led to the Christian belief in world-end, in the need for a basic renewal Between the wholly

secular vision of a Claudian and the uncompromising rejection of all social action by a Jerome, the world itself went on its way, seeking to find a workable compromise in which something of Christian revolt would be mixed with something of Roman civic spirit

Claudian made one attempt at the mythological epic, *The Rape of Proserpine* Here he achieves the coherent narrative style which his political poems lacked there is unity of conception and execution, but at the cost of the urgent pressures which both make and break the political poems Yet the theme is not casually chosen, the same emotion feeds the myth as the political story. Proserpine, the earth bride, the promised fullness, has been snatched from the light, and desolation is on the world Into the symbolic statement of the dark and grief which have stricken the earth Claudian pours an element of himself which the direct political approach had excluded, a dreamy and delicate richness, an autumnal brooding virtue Inevitably, the inspiration faded when he had to tell of the redemption of the lost earth-bride from the dark He ended with the questing of the bereaved Mother The torch of her search goes glimmering over the fields

> The cave-dogs feel it reaching through the dark
> Some shrink Some not yet scared to silence bark

And the last words of the poem tell of the final sound of life in the frightened night The light flutters with the shadowy form over sea and land

> Each rut is wet with tears
> She weeps at every sign scored on the earth

Pars nondum exterrita Some not yet scared to silence It was for them that Claudian spoke the last bark in the swallowing night [6]

For those who refused to be scared the image of Eternal Rome had to be elevated above the flux and disorder It has been suggested that Claudian and his friends helped to bring about the reverence for papal Rome by their deification Their direct influence could, of course be easily exaggerated but the trend to which they gave voice, and which in Prudentius is already showing the first full blend of Christian and Roman respect for Rome, did play an essential part in creating the medieval concept of Rome as the world-centre [7] That these men could hold

their faith so stubbornly is perhaps extraordinary—unless we can realise how the terms "Rome" and "civilisation" had become synonymous in men's minds But yet more extraordinary is the way in which Claudian managed to keep intact in his idea of Rome the republican belief in liberty, in the absolute need of Rome to be a society of free men who obeyed without question their sense of right. In a remarkable passage, he seeks to define the nature and duties of the Emperor in terms of Stoical concepts of duty and virtue, the freedom which is freedom from fear and which is denied equally to slave or tyrant. I give this passage (*Had Fortune set you on the Parthian throne*) among the translations Set it against the actual scene of intrigue and servility at the imperial court, and we get a strange feeling of the split that had come more and more over men's minds and actions In one sense there is flattery in the pretence that the Emperor is not an Oriental despot, in another sense the statement is a brave and desperate attempt to keep alive values which the poet feels to be necessary to civilisation

In this broken world the poet seeks to protect an image of the courage and independence which the Romans had set up as ideals in the days of their struggles under the Republic.

> Amid the environing terrors he said no word
> unworthy of Latium.

That is Claudian describing Stilicho amid the shadowy violence of a collapsing society And, Glover comments, it "was written by an Alexandrian Greek and written of a Vandal" In that fact alone we touch something of the great work which the stubborn Latin farmers had done in building a new world. Into the Empire had gone a cement of republican ideals which Stoicism consolidated and which was handed on to Europe. To the last men felt that the Roman virtues were the real thing that freedom and courage and civic devotion were the ideals, and that existing society had failed by its lapse from the ceaseless effort to actualise them. Thus, in 448, the historian and diplomatist Priscus was on an embassy from Byzantium to Attila the Hun and at the Hun headquarters on the Hungarian plain he met a renegade Roman citizen. The latter at first spoke confidently of the benefits gained by going over to the barbarians, but Priscus

called up all his eloquence to defend Greek culture and Roman law. The renegade was driven to take refuge in tears "He admitted the laws were excellent and the Roman Constitution admirable, if only the rulers had not so grievously lost their predecessors' spirit that they were destroying society." Something positive in the Roman way of life, something of faith in human power to order a free and full life, never faded out of Graeco-Roman life. Rome was civilisation

Again and again Claudian returns to this theme:

> City as old as Time, destroying Fate
> will bring you under her power when Nature breaks
> the sky and gives the stars new laws

The longest passage in which this exultant pride speaks is that in the Third Book of the poem on Stilicho's Consulship, in which he claims that adversity has always given Rome new forces, that she is the "primal cradle of justice" and has carried justice and brotherhood to the world's end

> Setting out from one small place
> she wields a power as broad as sunlight

She has taken the concept of active citizenship in a civilisation based on peace, and spread it throughout the earth ("Her rule of peace" is stated as a truism, amid the veering indiscriminate wars of the period) And she will never fall, because the Roman code of justice and virtue means that she is exempt from the corrupting forces which rotted former empires from within

> This is the City that Stilicho and the gods guard

It is easy enough to deride such declarations of a faith which almost every fact in the world contradicted, and to point out what a blind eye is turned to all the sufferings and discords which the actual working out of the Empire had brought about. Still, the enormous importance and courage of the words remain

At moments we get a glimpse of the anxiety underlying the brave pronouncements Near the end of the poem against Eutropius the satirical thrust comes through into a sober perception of dangers "How many cities, so long unused to war's alarms, have been smashed by a single irruption" Lydia and the

richest cities of Asia are being laid waste Aurora appeals to Stilicho, and declares that the corrupt rule of the eastern half of the Empire (the rule of Eutropius) "increases the number of lords while the land they should control is lost"

But we have not exhausted the aspects of Claudian in his political vituperative, and symbolic poems The evocative power over imagery which *The Rape of Proserpine* shows in its finer passages stirs at times with all the romantic overtones of yearning for escape into the pure fullness of things The lines from the *Epithalamium* to which I have given the title *The Hidden Land* are the liveliest expression of this desire, but perhaps even more effective is the little quatrain to which Claudian himself has given the romantic title *It is a Scene Far Away* (*Est in conspectu longe locus*) I give this with another short poem a description of Smyrna, which shows us the naturalistic material of the dream Presumably Claudian first wrote the Smyrna poem, and then was kindled by the picture of "sure tranquillity" to essay a dream image of peace

3 *Images of Renewal* A yet further side of the poet appears in his keen interest in curiosities, scientific and natural matters of interest. To some extent he is following the dilettante amusements of the literary folk of the earlier period of the declining Empire the poets of the Silver Age But there is more in it than that 'The choice of subjects, dictated at first by convention was wide enough to suggest new possibilities, and these exercises tended to keep the versifier close to things that had a real meaning and relevance—a landscape a river, a building a statue, or even an unusual phenomena of nature ' The Smyrna poem is one example In others we see the attempt to develop the paradoxes of the Schools Childish as many of those paradoxical problems may seem at first glance, they often revolve round basic matters such as the relation of change to continuity, of movement to identity, and so on. That is they seek to deal with complexities of real process which analytic logic could not handle

A typical paradox of this sort was that which Gorgias started off when he spoke of vultures being living tombs of the corpses they ate Ennius introduced it into Latin and makes a vulture bury its dead man in a cruel tomb Lucretius used the fancy in

an alliterative line (*viva videns vivo sepiliri viscera busto*), and Ovid makes Tereus lament that he has turned himself into the wretched tomb of his son. And there is a long history of imitations, in medieval and later verse.[9] Why did the idea, which seems jejeune enough to us, have such an appeal? Precisely because it raised a problem of material transformation in an emotionally provocative way. Claudian does not use this particular paradox, but the same underlying point appeared in other ways, e.g. in his epigram on a group cut from a single block of marble:

> Man merges with car, steeds flow together,
> so great is the artist's skill. Each comes from the other.
> All these forms in itself a single block can gather.
> One mass breeds many shapes from the cleaving edge

This in itself would not be much; but Claudian's interest in the phenomena of movement and change goes further than a mere playing-round with clichés of the schools. He describes various creatures, the porcupine, french mules, the lobster, the electric ray; his description is minute and shows despite its fanciful elaborations a close observation. What interests him about the porcupine is the possible relation of its quills to the invention of pointed missiles by men. In the ray it is the strange force it owns which stirs his interest. (Oddly, in lobster, ray and porcupine it is the creature's self-sufficiency in defence which he emphasises: "Alone he hoards the whole of war's resources." There is thus an emotional direction in Claudian's interest, which alone shows that he has a controlling principle at work in his theme-selection.)

Other poems reveal a considerable interest in the workings of Nature. The reasons for the overflow of his own native Nile come in for scrutiny. He deals with the crystal enclosing a drop of water, the shell, and the magnet or loadstone. The loadstone poem, like that on the ray, derives from a keen curiosity as to the nature of the unknown energies in nature.[10] It seeks in alchemic fashion to interpret the unions of energy in sexual terms. Its prying into the "secret net," its imaginative sense of obscure forces of fusion which hold clues to the real nature of the universe, have not been appreciated by critics, who evaluate such work from the purely classical angle. *The Loadstone* is a poem which faces away from Vergil and the Augustan world, towards the Middle Ages and Alchemy, towards the new struggling forces out

of which in time emerge a new concept of transformation and the foundation of modern science

Even more interesting as a revelation of the way in which symbols of entire change and movement haunted the poet's mind is the poem on *The Phoenix* The phoenix-image was one of the dominant images of the age, and its advent is a symptom of the breakdown of the Roman Imperium. Ovid and Statius knew the fabulous bird, and Seneca, Pliny the Elder and Tacitus mention it But for these men it is either only one among many fantasy-creatures or else a proverbial term [11] This bird, supposed to live some 500 years or more, and to revive from the pyre of its death, was to Seneca a metaphor for rarity. Tacitus records its appearance in the reign of Tiberius, and says that it consumes itself on a pyre of myrrh on the altar of the sun "That the phoenix, from time to time, appears in Egypt, seems to be a fact sufficiently ascertained" But it is from the third century that it arrives as a central symbol In its Graeco-Oriental origins it was a Dionysiac symbol of world renewal, it does not occur in the Christian catacombs But the Christians soon took it over as a symbol of resurrection and of the renewal of life In the neoplatonic hymn to the sun, in Chapter 2 above, it will be found as an important sun emblem, and about the same time a long poem, attributed to Lactantius, shows that the Christians could make as good use of it as the pagan apologists Claudian in his poem seems to have had this Christian poem in mind, and if so, his work is an effort to recapture the symbol for the pagan side To use it as he does with no Christian reference is tantamount to a pagan purification of the theme In his poem on Stilicho's Consulship, the new life leaping in the Empire at Stilicho's magistracy is compared to the phoenix rebirth There can be no doubt that for Claudian the phoenix represented the ever-renewing power of the *Imperium Romanum* It is his symbol of faith in the power of man to come through any disaster and to renew civilisation

The way in which this symbol is used by both Christian and Roman is an interesting example of the strong common ground between the creeds, which has been appearing amid all the contradictions and clashes We noted above how the vast movement of pilgrimages and penitences in the last centuries B C

flowed into Christianity, which in its origins had been a peculiarly *intense canalisation of certain elements of the mystery religions* fusing with dreams of a liberating hero. In the process many of the finer aspects of early Christianity seem clouded and perverted; and yet we must recognise the inevitable nature of the results as the Church moves to a fuller point of vantage in a disintegrating world. The process is by no means a simple one of confusion and distortion. The full implementation of the Christian programme in action could work out no other way; and at every moment vitally necessary influences were moving in from paganism.[12] Raby well says of the Syrian neoplatonist philosopher Iamblichus that he "sketched the first outline of a Catholic Church of heathendom, that impossible ideal which made such an appeal to Julian when he attempted his religious reformation. Iamblichus looked to Egypt for an organised priestly system in which the ecclesiastical hierarchy reflected the majestic hierarchy of the gods." But this "mystical church with sacraments" (Greffken's phrase) was not a mad dream: it was an hypothesis which accurately uttered certain needs of the world-situation and which pointed out the way in which to some extent the Catholic Church had to organise itself.[13] "The project of establishing a church of this sort is one part of that organic development in which the rising fervour of pagan piety expresses itself." In the same way, Plotinus, the great Egyptian neoplatonist, foreshadowed the whole structure of scholasticism. His pupil, the Tyrian Porphyry, provided the introduction to Aristotle's *Categories*, which set for the medieval world the central scholastic problem of genera and species.[14] In his *Isagoge* he wrote:

> Concerning genera or species, the question indeed whether they have substantial existence, or whether they consist in bare intellectual concepts only, or whether, if they have a substantial existence they are corporeal or incorporeal, and whether they are separable from the sensible properties of the things (or particulars of sense) or are only in those properties and subsisting about them, I shall forbear to determine.

Of that it has been well said· the "statement does not look epoch-making: it looks extremely dull. But it makes history, and is vital within its course. Rashdall, a philosopher and theologian as well as an historian, who was not given to facile enthusiasms, went so far as to say that outside the pages of the

Bible there was not a single sentence in all literature with more widespread and permanent effects on life and thought"[16]

But to return to Claudian He had for friend and patron not only Stilicho, but Stilicho's highly-cultured and politically-minded wife, Serena, who seems to have arranged a rich marriage for him A statue of him was set up in his honour in the Forum of Trajan, and its inscription titled him *Vir Clarissimus, Tribunus et Notarius* Presumably he had an official position on Stilicho's staff The height of his career was the recitation of his poem on the Gothic War, in 402, after Alaric's defeat at Pollentia, apparently it was given in the Library of the Temple of Apollo But he was soon to come on bad days Presumably in his reckless period of good fortune he had satirised the greed of a fellow Egyptian, who rose high and became Praetorian Prefect after Stilicho's death That Claudian had to pay for his attack we can guess from an epistle which begs the Prefect's mercy—and begs it, not by any Christian appeal, but by quoting examples of piety out of Greek myth

4 *Rutilius* Claudius Rutilius Namatianus, our second spokesman for Rome's eternity, was a Gaul His father held high office at Rome before him, and he himself filled the posts of City Prefect and then Magister Officiorum All we know of him comes from his one poem *Journey Home* (*De Reditu*), which tells how he left Rome to return to his native region by sea He had precedents for such a poem in Horace and Ovid but his work is all his own There is no kindling lyric intensity in his verses, which move in easy narrative Their virtue lies in their mixture of concision and fluency, which ends by yielding us a fairly thorough picture of the man Like Ausonius, Rutilius unbares no depths but there is freshness, there is something genuinely new, in this confident man-to-man approach In the passage where he utters his faith in the destiny of Rome there is a firm dignity, and to appreciate its full force we must remember that it was written in 416—some six years after Rome had fallen to Alaric the barbarian To men like Claudian and Rutilius such an event, which we might think would whelm them with despair, was a minor accident which could not have any ultimate effect on Rome's civilising mission

He opens by asking "Are you surprised that I've come home so late? No, be surprised that I've left Rome so soon" And goes on to say how fortunate are those born in the city But he must go The war-ravaged fields of his native Gaul demand his return

> To slight one's homeland, when all's safe, may pass
> But common loss needs personal response

Since he knows of coming dangers, he must go to share them with his fellows

> It's time to mend the broken fields and farms
> at least to build again the shepherd s huts

He decides to go by sea, as the rivers have flooded their banks and overflowed the plains, and the mountain roads are covered with rock-falls Tuscany and the Aurelian Way are impassable on account of the Goths, who are putting everything to fire and sword Roadhouses and bridges are unsure So, at last, regretfully, he tears himself away from Rome, after a long address of farewell He puts aside all doubts, all memory of the unfortunate state of things his previous lines have revealed, and gives the finest direct verse-passage of praise to Rome written by any Latin poet (First passage of translation)

His friends went down to the port with him, and then returned to Rome, except Rufius—apparently a highborn youth who is expecting the consulship He wanted to go on awhile with Rutilius, who, however, insisted on his return to Rome Rutilius then entered his ship on the right side of Tiber's mouth—on the other side the sands had made it impossible for ships to come in

> Now Sun was near to Scorpion and the nights
> were lengthened and a coolness took the earth
> Port we re entered At the enforced delays
> I could not find it in my heart to fret.
> While we were watching pass the angry days
> coming in autumn as the Pleiads set
> I turned my face in Rome s direction still
> and caught her hills within my failing gaze
> My eyes took charge and conjured up at will
> her dear lost spaces all her pleasant ways
> No smoke drift was it told me where she lay
> Capital of the World with lordly crest

He depicts a Rome in which the old cultural enjoyments were still in full swing "My astonished ears still hear the rumbling

Circus, the rousing handclaps speak from the full theatre" After a fortnight, the ship sailed, with a new moon and a favourable wind He had previously sent back to Rome his young kinsman Palladius, who had recently come from Gaul to study law This lad s father seems to have put down a Breton revolt

> We sailed at blink of dawn that fading moment
> when colour returning bares the fields to sight,
> in small sized craft we hugged the shore

He continues with this sort of simple detail, often unpretentiously fresh, over his whole itinerary Despite the bothers and dangers of the journey he can find time to stop for a sight such as the Bull's Baths hot springs which he has to go three miles inland to visit and which he describes He pays calls and makes a special trip by carriage to Pisa, because that town has a statue of his father, and he finds time for special maledictions on Jews and monks Some of these passages will be found among the translations I give It must be understood that Rutilius's dislike of "Jews' is at least in large part propaganda against Christianity An editor remarks, "*Ce sont les chrétiens dont parle ici Rutilius on les confondait avec les Juifs*"[16] But it was not a matter of confusion A man like Rutilius makes a special point of not naming the abhorred thing by its own name which he treats as unclean He does not want to admit in any way a connection between his beloved Roma and the "sect" which by some mistake has achieved the connivance and aid of the State That is the emotion to be read into these polemical passages

5 *Merobaudes* The third poet to come up in this chapter is a Spaniard Flavius Merobaudes was an important man of affairs He had a statue set up in his honour in the Forum of Trajan Its inscription records that he was *Vir Spectabilis* and a Count of the Sacred Consistory, and that he was so talented as to wield with equal force pen and sword Very little of his verse remains but we can see that he made a redeeming hero out of the general Aetius as Claudian had out of Stilicho I give some lines from his poem on the second birthday of Aetius s son He goes on to compare the child s mother with Thetis who also had a wonder child But where Achilles was plunged into the Styx to gain his

magic powers, this child has been plunged into the waters of baptism. So he tells the Child:

> you with these consecrating rites
> Rome to her heaving bosom invites.

He seems an honestly conforming Christian; but the odd way in which Rome thrusts the Church aside and receives to her queenly lap the wet baby, is an excellent example of the dominating Roma-image.[17]

6. *Sidonius Apollinaris.* With our fourth poet, Caius Sollius Modestus Sidonius Apollinaris, we return to Gaul.[18] Born of senatorial family at Lyons about 430, he died in 489 after a very full life. In his work we see the sad fate that had come over the official defender of the fixed imperial culture. For what Ausonius and Claudian, amid many futilities and falsities, did manage at their best to make an expressive instrument becomes in the hands of Sidonius a hopelessly clumsy and dull mechanism. Yet he clearly has an almost frantic enthusiasm for the worn devices of rhetoric, and the stereotyped literary activity in which he and his friends delighted was felt by them as a noble expression of the tradition in all its fullness. To carry on the work of the schools was the highest possible human aim. Sidonius laments to a rhetor of Vienne that few are left with any respect for polite studies. To a friend Hesperius he declares, "What I most love in you is your love of letters." He is very conscious of the isolated position of the educated. "The numbers of the indifferent grow at such a rate that unless your little band can save the purity of the Latin tongue from the rust of sorry barbarisms we shall soon have to mourn its abolition and decease. All the purple patches of discourse will be bleached out through the apathy of our people." He even goes so far as to declare that class distinctions have been levelled before the one basic distinction of lettered and unlettered. In 478 he writes to John the grammarian: "Since old grades of rank are now abolished which once distinguished the high from the low, in future culture must afford the sole criterion of nobility."

He and his group of literary friends exchange verses and fulsome compliments, in which the whole treasury of historical reference

is ransacked for ridiculous comparisons The praises are wholeheartedly given if only because they are meant to extort a return of similar hyperboles But the writers are not insincere, since all real point of reference in life is gone, they genuinely cannot tell good from bad art They perceive only externals, in the simplest and most superficial sense Since Sidonius can see that there is roughly the same words and the same sort of rhetorical devices in his own verse and in Ovid's, he can see no reason why he isn't as good as Ovid The ponderous foolery of these "literary criticisms" goes beyond any possibility of parody

I find your hymn admirable at once in brevity and richness of content at once tender and exalted in poetic charm and truth to history superior to any lyrics or dithyrambs that I know It is your peculiar merit that you observe each foot in the metre each syllable in the foot and each emphasis in the syllable and in a restricted measure none too rich in opportunity you contrive to include great opulence of words, the compressed terse metre does not exclude long-drawn beauty of ornate diction It seems mere play to you with your tiny trochees and tinier pyrrhics to surpass in effect not merely the molossian and anapaestic ternary but even the quarternary the epitrite and paeonian rhythms

And this pedantic frivolity is mixed with an attempt at temperamental coquetry

On my arrival at Bordeaux your messenger brought me a letter from you full of nectar rich with blooms and pearls You arraign my silence and ask me for some of my poems in a few of those verses of yours which your cadenced voice so often sends echoing from your melodious palate like music from a flute of many stops In this you take mean advantage of your royal munificence you have sent your gift you feel impregnable

Enough. You are right to send a command from your place of ease bidding me sing because you are in the mood to dance In any case I must obey and far from acknowledging compulsion I yield of my own free will, but spare me if you can the criticism of your proud Catonian brow

You know well enough what manner of thing a poet s gladness is his spirit is entangled in grief as the fish in nets if sorrow or affliction comes his sensitive soul does not so lightly work free from the bonds of anguish I am still unsuccessful in obtaining a decision about my mother in-law s estate

The Empire has fallen much lower than in the days of Rutilius, but there was still a political career open to the well born poet with a control of rhetoric. Sidonius wrote three long and flatulent panegyrics to emperors and the third gained him the City

Prefecture. But before long he was back in Gaul. As example of Sidonius's elevated style:

> When past the Stars Nature the young Jove set,
> the New God took over an ancient Kingdom.
> The Deities sought to pay respects to his Deity,
> in differing manners each one sang *Encore!*

And as for Chiron the Centaur:

> The Halfman merited to be heard and please—
> though as he sang he blurted a hinny out.

But bad as the poems of Sidonius are, they have the interest of a dead-end. It is with him that the imperial tradition dies out. He fought hard to preserve his verse, as well as his prose, from what he called barbarisms; and in the process he killed the medium off. A sickly sterility twines through every sentence. He is writing in a literary hothouse from which he strives to keep out every healthy air. But though he kept any draughts well away from his verse, in his prose a more complex struggle is visible.

He has left us a large number of letters, collected after the example of Pliny, in which, despite his effort to be as literary as possible, many details and impacts from the wild bustling world around him creep in. Against his will, he gives us a vivid picture of his society; and his style reveals the pressures of his life:

> While diffuseness is his besetting sin, some of his phrases are condensed to the point of impenetrability, and his constructions are rendered obscure by the imperfect development of his thought Petrarch wondered at the audacity of his style, yet, as Baret has remarked, when it is examined, it is found that in prose he has fewer direct irregularities than Tacitus, and, in verse, than Vergil
>
> It is rather a certain strange exotic character, instinctively felt but not easily defined, which characterises our author's work, compared not only with that of the golden age, but with that of a late writer like Symmachus. He is 'heteroclite'; his cadences have an unfamiliar ring, when they are read aloud they strike us as differing not in degree, but in kind from those of the classical authors
>
> Were it not that an early critic has given blunt utterance to the suspicion (Giraldus of Ferrara), we should hardly dare to hint that some subtle Celtic influence had really affected his manner, and that, unknown to himself, the

older Gaul was secretly revenged upon this son of hers who had ears only for an Italian idiom [19]

Dalton goes on to suggest that eating into Sidonius's effort to write pure classical Latin were the changes laying the foundations of the Romance language in South France The synthetic structure of older Latin tends to pass into analysis, conjunctions (*quia, quod*) replace the complementary infinitive, the abstract replaces the concrete term, prepositions are more and more attached to inflected cases, the genitive is used in a way almost French

In Sidonius's work, *then, we meet a mixture of decadence* and barbarism without an effective fusion which would stabilise and *enrich the cultural development The main interest of his letters* lies in the picture they give of the society among which he moved The mid fifth century was one of the turning points in the breakdown of the Empire and the growth of feudalism* The barbarians had moved in mass into the Empire, and there was no pretence of keeping them out The Huns had appeared under Attila, and it was generally to the interest of both Germanic kinglets and Roman officials to keep them from penetrating into the rich areas The senatorial estate was being fortified Monasticism had spread throughout the West, and the last elements of internal democracy had died out of the Christian Church "For three centuries the Christian organisation had been democratic," says Bury "Its union with the monarchical state changed all that."[20] Sidonius *gives us an excellent picture of the way in which the* people were cheated out of the right of electing bishops [21] The *senatorials were very rich—as a class they had rapidly increased* in the provinces after Constantine's time [22] They lent money at *12 per cent., and by simple seizure and mortgage foreclosure* they had come to own nearly all the area of regions they had no legal compulsion to defend *When they wished they could defy* the law [23]

7 *Bishop* Sidonius, belonging to that section of this class *which prided itself on preserving classical culture with its basis* in the secular Schools, seems the last man to have any living *relationship to the Church. No doubt he had always conformed* without any sense of hypocrisy, but clearly his culture has no *specific Christian tincture And yet this is the man who at the*

age of forty-two was elected Bishop of the Diocese of Auvergne, and at once turned himself into a devoted pastor. He stood by his flock in the miseries and perils of the Visigothic irruption; Euric imprisoned him; and he died amid the general grief of his people. As Bishop he would live a life very unlike that of the senatorial lounging on his estate or visiting friends in a round of generous festivity. He would celebrate Mass, teach and preach; live in the main town of his diocese, receiving all and any callers in the early morning, dealing with complaints and disputes. A bishop normally had much contact with the civil magistrates, and was the person on whom was likely to fall the task of keeping good relations between the new barbarian powers and the Gallo-Romans.[24]

It seems that what called out a new vigour and responsible powers of leadership in a man like Sidonius was not a personal conversion to the deeper aspects of the Christian evangel, but the fact that his election opened up before him a real field of social action. Without any sense of incongruity, he assumed the episcopal garb and acted with a devotion derived from the tradition of Roman civic responsibility. In such a development a decisive step has been made towards the synthesis of Christian and Roman elements out of which Europe finally emerged. Sidonius thus, taken in his entirety, in his combined literary and social character, turns out a much more important and vital person than a cursory glance at his frigidly elaborated poems would suggest. And it is by relating the poems and letters to the story of his life that we get a glimpse of something like the fullness of the historical process at this moment of time and place.

In the Auvergne the last stand of the Gallo-Romans against the pervasive barbarians took place—the Auvergne, where Vercingetorix some five hundred years earlier had made the last desperate stand against Caesar's Roman legions. And a letter of Sidonius gives us a vivid picture of a corner of the fight. With all its self-conscious picturesqueness, the prose is noble in its way, and links Sidonius with the Claudian who could fuse his praise of Stilicho with a fiery rhetoric of faith in Rome. The letter is addressed to Ecdicius, Sidonius's brother-in-law, who had gone off to some Burgundian court, and appeals to him to return to Clermont:

resources (and with little aid from the authorities) what amounted to a public force I shall not speak of the setbacks you imposed on barbarian raiders and the barrier you erected against a boldness that was growing intolerable, or of those surprise assaults which cut up whole squadrons with only two or three casualties on your side

Such heavy losses did you cause the enemy by these unexpected attacks that they once tried out a despicable ruse to hide the extent of their affliction They hacked off the heads of all the men that they could not bury during the few hours of night, and left the trunks forgetting that the mere removal of the identifying faces from the dead would not conceal the plight of the weakened survivors In the morning light they saw their shameful device exposed in all its brutal ineffectiveness and they resorted at once to undisguised obsequies But their hasty movement retrieved the trick no better than the trick had disguised the slaughter They did not even raise a temporary barrow the corpses were neither washed shrouded nor interred but the disturbed rites accorded to them suited well the manner of their death

Bodies were collected in mass and heaped in dripping wagons and since you never ceased a moment from pressing the defeated enemy they had to be dumped into houses which were hurriedly set on fire till the remains of the blazing roof timbers collapsed and provided funeral pyres

8 *His World* The barbarian invasions did not greatly shake security of land tenures Even the big landowner had only a partial confiscation to fear When Sidonius visits his friends near Bordeaux and Narbonne they are living luxuriously, carrying on the sumptuous literary life, yet each is now a subject of the Visigoths[26] They often have no political interest in the Empire, but consider themselves Romans The girls of the upper classes have retired into something like Oriental seclusion from which in later life they never quite emerge Administration goes on deteriorating roads grow insecure, fugitives—bankrupts, runaway agents or peasants—set up brigand fastnesses In the overrun areas there can be no pursuit of imperial or municipal honours, but festivals at a church consecration or on the day of the patron saint are important events, to which all come Between the services games and talk are carried on Pilgrimages are already popular

Sidonius tells many anecdotes We hear of a violent rhetor who is murdered by his slaves, of the way in which some feeble impromptu poem is composed amid paeans of praise of a free woman whom a slave abducts, of the way in which elections to the episcopate are rigged, of a man in holy orders who harasses

his sister in law for money, of a Syrian monk Abraham, driven abroad by Sassanian persecution, who settles near Clermont, of Vectius, a noble who lives in the world but in private carries out a strict regimen of devotions, of an ex-quaestor who goes into retreat in the Jura monasteries, of a young man who weakens his resources by building a church of a saintly Bishop Patiens, of another saintly bishop, Lupus of Troyes, who is harrowed by a breach of literary etiquette, of a deacon who has been driven by barbarians from his home and gets into trouble by sowing a crop on Church land, of a small trader whom Sidonius tries to help into becoming a splendid merchant, of a prince, apparently Frankish, with flame red mantle over white silk tunic, bedecked with gold of a lively old ball playing veteran, of an insinuating young man who gets hold of an heiress And so on[26]

South Gaul at this time had a small heresy of its own Faustus of Riez a theologian led a semi Pelagian School, and his work on Free Grace was condemned by Pope Gelasius Abbot of Lerins for twenty seven years, he also wrote, anonymously, a treatise on the Materiality of the Soul, to which Claudianus Mamertus of Vienne, a priest friend of Sidonius, wrote a reply Tertullian and Jerome could be cited on Faustus's side, while Augustine had supported the opposing line Faustus argued that to call the soul immaterial was to claim for it a quality belonging only to God Mamertus, it is interesting to note, in his Second Book supports his thesis on the evidences of Greek and Roman pagan philosophers[27]

Another acquaintance of Sidonius was Auspicius, Bishop of Toul, who wrote about 460 a poem in iambic dimeters to Argobast the Frankish Comes in Trier It shows a very different approach to diction and to metre than is to be found in Sidonius's work. In it we see the reorientation already examined in Ambrose's iambics carried one step further towards a rhythmical rather than a quantitative basis There are a few rhymes, but they seem accidents What is important is the way in which word and verse accent are roughly corresponding

I send this welcoming verse on
to meet that famous person
Count Argobast my friend.
Auspicius I who send.

Thanks to the heavens above
I give with heart of love
that you, great man, come down
so close to Toul town . . .[28]

The humble verses are not worth translating, except in so far as they help us to understand how this direct diction, structurally near to Ambrose's quatrains, is linked with the movement into rhythmical form.

CLAUDIAN

THE GOTHIC WAR: STILICHO RELIEVES ROME

Who spread the word? None knows; but Rome that day
echoed *The hero's come.* The happy folk
applauded, certain of Stilicho's support,
the omen of Triumph. Who can now depict
the Emperor's joy, the courtier's greeting zeal?
We watched from skiey towers, and saw a cloud
of hurrying dust, and knew not if it hid
a friend or foe. In wavering scales of silence
we stood, till out of whirling dust there broke
a star, Stilicho's helm; his glistening hair
of white beneath. The welcoming shout arose
along the walls. *It's he!*
Through gates of safety
jostled the crowd to welcome the army home.

Gone are our worthless levies now, no more
the reaper drops his hook to fumble a spear
or Ceres leaves the plough and lifts a shield,
mocked by Bellona, while a wordy mob
of niggling leaders throng. Rome's power is here,
her Leader, Mars is guising here on earth.

The richer we were heaped with heartening hopes,
the poorer grew the Goths, who'd brushed the stars,
crossing the Alps, and thought they'd won the world

at last, unchallenged But they saw instead
our kindling youth our instant infantry,
our squadrons, and a country strong with streams
and forts They felt the snare, a dim distress
fatigued their blood. *Too eagerly they'd marched*
on Italy, and Rome, once counted theirs,
seemed far away, their mighty adventure turned
to weariness

THE GOTHIC WAR. THE BATTLE OF POLLENTIA

Stilicho at swiftest marching speed
led out his men and stirred their clamorous hearts
"Come, friends of Rome, take vengeance for the wounds
of Italy Redeem the shame you have felt
for the armies driven back our Prince besieged,
and the Alps traversed Wipe out blush with blood
There wait the foe you often beat in Greece
Strife of a bickering world has kept them safe,
and not their strength, while, tearing treaties up,
they sold their treacheries to the East or West
Remember' tribes that ruthless Britain breeds,
Danube and Rhine, are watching close the event
in arms One triumph here ends many wars
Repair the Roman glory and on your backs
support the cracking Empire Draw your swords
Our victory means the peace of all the world.
Now not on Thracian Haemus do we fight,
not where Maenalus shadows Alpheus stream
are we encamped, not Argos we defend
but in the core and vitals of our home
we stand. For Father Tiber, lock your shields!"

These exhortations both to horse and foot
he cried. His orders also reached the ranks
of our auxiliaries, and the Alans now
obeyed our trumpets learning from their chief
to follow Roman fates in scorn of death.
Small was that chief in build, but large in soul,

it grows, and fosters life. When darkly drained,
it leaves its owner but an oarless ship,
a lyre that gives no sound, a bow unstrung.
Yet he who does not learn to know himself
and calm his passionate flaws, shall never come
to virtue. Long and difficult is the way.
Then learn for all, what others learn for self.

The furthest Indies you may rule and sway,
the Chinese, Medes, or soft-thewed Arab folk;
yet if you fear, or lust awry, or rage,
you're knuckling down, a slave. You hear within
a tyrant-slave. When over self you're king,
you'll justly own the world.

Stand first in service. Though in every trait
surpassed, by mercy we can mate the gods.
In act be frank and open, true to friends
and deaf to whisperers, who, if once indulged,
will plague your life with vain anxieties.
No watch, no fence of spears, can make you safe,
but love alone. And love you cannot force;
it comes of mutual faith and honest wills.
Gaze on the beautiful world! It binds itself
with love; the elements eternally
merge in harmonious forms. The sun accepts
his track of space; the sea accepts her shores;
and air which ever clasps and bears the earth
leaves us uncrushed and yet upholds the mass.

He fears, who makes afraid! The tyrant's fate
is fear. Let such grow jealous, stab the brave,
live hedged with swords and ringed with venom-tricks,
in treacherous strongholds, scared and menacing—
but you, be Father and Citizen. Consult
the general will and good, and not your own.

How oft he's stript while doctors poked and squeezed
to find if he was hiddenly diseased
The buyers, sorry, put him up anew
while he was vendible But when he grew
a shrunken corpse, foul, pendulous and bent,
they tried to lose him as a gift, he passed
through endless yokes, grown old in years at last,
a new-arrival still No end he met
but ever a fresh start.
                                        While cradled yet,
he learned life's ruthless ways castrated, torn
to further anguish from his pangs when born
The Armenian comes Children he turns to vice,
defiled by loss and yet enhanced in price;
the blood's twin seated source he trained is to slice—
he grasps it now, and with one snip destroys
the hope of fatherhood and marriage-joys
The baby swooned, the sinews, gashed with pain,
send throbbing numbness to his deepest brain

Are we to praise the man who robbed our foe
of strength? or blame the fates? It's hard to know
The eunuch's shame has aided him at length
he'd still be slaying, had he kept his strength

Dragged through Assyrian marts, he joined the train
of some Galatian dealer sold again,
and yet again The lists of masters pall
In chief was Ptolemaeus of the Stall,
who tired at last and hastened to surrender
a lad (too young for work, but hardly tender)
to Arinthaeus Yielding sad to force,
our eunuch thus lamented his divorce
"Is this your faith, my master? must I rue
the faded charms I've sacrificed to you—
our trystings at the Inn? and can it be
that you deny you swore to set me free?
Can you desert your widow cruelly?
Such is our lot A woman, spoiled, can hold
her man through children She, a wife grown old,

can claim a mother's reverence For me
such hopes are vain, I lack the woman's plea
Love goes with beauty. On my cheeks no rose
remains What art can save my back from blows?
A wrinkled lad can't please "
He ceased to sob,
wholeheartedly he took the pander's job,
an artist in seduction, he could snare
the purest wench, no cautionary care
could save a bed, the bolts possessed no power—
yes, Danae crouching in her brazen tower
he'd lug abroad Of lover's tears he told
The greedy girls he bribed, the stern, cajoled,
with wantons, joked No bawd could better flirt,
nudge at a servant girl and twitch her skirt,
or whisper low a message slyly hot,
select the perfect fornication spot
or fool the cuckold if he guessed the truth
Thus, once to Lais the Corinthian youth
brought spoils from either sea, but when her hair
jarred greyly with the rose, when in despair
she found her lovers lessening their relays,
when in her mirror's frown she read no praise—
to others then she lent a bawdy aid,
haunting the stews where queenlier parts she'd played,
vicariously lewd, perversely spayed

Thus grew Eutropius great Though eunuchs own
one worth (as bedroom sentries) he alone
thrived on adultery He squeaked and quailed
beneath the lash as often as he failed
his master's lust. In vain he pleaded years
of faithful service, soon despite his tears,
included in some dowry-list, he changed
his roof Thus, combing lady's hair he ranged
The future Consul, naked and deboshed,
held up a basin while his lady washed,
and while she panted, sprawled, in summer-weathers,
this Noble fanned her limbs with peacock-feathers

Now he was slack with age, he peaked and pined,
his fallen raisin-face was coarsely lined
Less furrowed shows a land the coulter slits,
or sails that shake in folds Disgusting nits
devoured his head Small clumps of hair, half shorn,
littered his scalp, like bits of barren corn,
stuck in a parching field His dirty brow
was like a swallow on a winter-bough,
moulting with mange of death in frosty air
To make his consulship a worse affair,
Fortune, with wealth, bestowed upon his face
this brand of ugliness as last disgrace

A pallid thing, whose bones showed through his clothing,
he soon infected everyone with loathing—
scarecrow for children, death's head at a treat,
the household curse, and omen in the street
His masters found his withered limbs would tire
when chopping wood to feed the kitchen-fire
or making beds, their goods they couldn't trust
to such a cheat—who bids a bawd of lust
to guard his wife? So out they kicked our lad,
a nuisance of a ghost, a corpse gone bad

Now, useless, he was free A shepherd chains
his dog and gives him milk to pay his pains
while faithfully he barks and guards the herd
from raiding wolves But when the eyes grown blurred
and drooping scabby ears betray the beast,
the man says "Off!" and saves the chain at least

Thus scorn can prove an aid By all expelled,
in ranging crimes the eunuch soon excelled,
and gave the chance to Fate O You, whoever
You are on high, was now your great endeavour
to mock mankind? The slave on no one s list,
attained an empire, he, a drab dismissed,
received a consul s palace of his own
When first the vixen entered there, a groan

escaped the world that he, a thing abhorred,
an often-auctioned corpse should near our Lord,
the Emperor The palace servants shrank
though slaves, they felt degraded in their rank
if to such menial-company they sank.

This is the creature thrust on Roman history
the eunuchs shun him Wrapt in soiling mystery
are all his years until, in crazy error,
one Abundantius brought shame and terror
down on himself and all the Eastern nation.
he raised a Scullion to the highest station.

But well has heaven devised the tragic joke.
Bad counsel first ensnares the man who spoke
Thus he who told the King in days gone by
(when Nile had dwindled till its bed was dry)
that Thunderer Jove desired a stranger's blood,
himself was sacrificed to bring the flood.
Thus he who made the Brazen Bull and spent
his wits to cast the torture instrument,
was ordered first by his Sicilian lord
to show how well the horrid image roared.
So with our Eunuch. Once in power, he sent
his patron packing into banishment
and seized his goods. a judgment which I hold
our Eunuch's only righteous act.
Grown old,
this paring of a man had scaled a seat
beyond his wildest dream. Beneath his feet
he saw the laws the nobles' heads inclined,
and Fate determined to be strangely kind.
Yet once he'd prayed for freedom and no more.
Veiling those shames he let his broodings soar
in servile pride. Soon nobles filled each jail
exiles in Ethiopia learned to wail
the burning deserts heard the screams of pain
and gentle blood was spilt at Ammon's fane.

The underdog, raised high, feels frantic goads
All things he fears, and strikes His rage explodes
to show his power's intact No beast's so savage
as slaves let loose amid the free to ravage
Recalling lashes and his former state,
he burns to lash, and, lashing, laughs with hate.
No sense of kinship makes the eunuch grow
compassionate We pity when we know
the pain, a common loss connects our hearts—
yet even eunuchs he maltreats!

His arts
are all for gold There all his passions aim
The only lust no knife can ever maim
is lust for gold The fingers trained to rifle
a cupboard or a coffer for some trifle,
to play with household locks, are freely seen
to rape a world with theft The land between
Haemus and Tigris stands *For Sale*

Then hear
the methods of the Empire's auctioneer!
A villa, pawned, got Africa A fool
gave his wife's gems for Syria to rule
A family mansion gained Bithynia All
may read the price list in the Consul's Hall
Galatia, Lydia, Pontus; each is noted
"You'd govern Lycia? There's the price that's quoted
Phrygia? A little more" He wants to see
a ticketed world, to sell it endlessly
since he himself was sold.

When rivals come,
the equal scales receive each proffered sum
The heaviest wins a province goes for gold
O blush, you gods! A race in bulk is sold
O blush, *a chattle with no rights, a naught,*
offers a town or marks a kingdom "bought"
Did conquering Cyrus lay great Croesus low
that for a eunuch Pactolus might flow?
Did Attalus keep Rome as heir in mind?
was dangerous Antiochus confined?

did Egypt own Augustus? Crete, Metellus?
did old Servilius beat the pirates, tell us,
that thus Eutropius should be well-endowed?
Pompeius' gains, that made the Romans proud,
Cilicia, Palestine . . . they're all for sale

Why heap these riches since you're doomed to fail
through lack of children Marrying or married,
you can't conceive or get; your hopes are parried
by nature or the knife. Though India's lent
great jewels, China, silks, Arabia, scent—
no man's so poor, though clad in thinnest shoddy,
to choose the eunuch's fortune with his body.

Tipsy with wealth, forgetting slavish days,
with wretched laws and men's affairs he plays
A eunuch's judge O why stand more aghast?
His every act's prodigious Search the past
for such monstrosities Who ever saw
a eunuch judging in a court of law?

Then, that no guilt or impudence remain
untried, he turns to war, and keeps again
portent on portent, games of deepening folly.
(Mars blushes Enyo in melancholy
turns from the Eastern Shame) With quiver flashing
the Amazonian crone goes wildly dashing,
practises war or parleys with the foe

The Goths are merry when our forces show
Men must be shot, they say - Soon cities blaze,
despite their walls, the countryside's a maze
of ruin Safety lies at sea. The soil
of Cappodocia yields the Goths its spoil,
and far as Caucasus the victor drives
the captive herds of cattle and of wives.
The flower of [illegible]
beyond Cimmeria. Bored the foemen stand.
They break and murder, glutted with the loot

Can shame within a woman slave find root?
can blushes dare that ignominious face?
As conqueror he returns Behind him pace
his fellow rankers, eunuch companies,
who'd bear Priapic flags with better ease
His creatures greet him, welcoming their saviour
Ungainly is his gratified behaviour
He puffs his baggy cheeks, he pants and spits,
sun bleached, with dust upon his head of nits,
in his falsetto tones he sobs and prattles,
and, shrill with vice, narrates the course of battles
"My sister'll testify," he squeaks at last,
"from patriotic zeal I'm failing fast,
yielding to envy, while the tempest raves
against me, may I sink beneath the waves"
That prayer we echo! Babbling on, he sighs
between each word and wipes his silly eyes—
as when a thirsty crone, come far to see
her daughter-in-law, sits down and instantly
asks for some wine

Why rush, you filthy thing
upon the crossing lines where weapons swing?
The distaff, not the staff of war, receive
Turn to the looms, not battle-dooms and weave
Prick on the lazy spinning girls and wind
the snow of wool for lady's-work designed

Or, if you stick to rites, take Cybelê,
not Mars Amid the drums learn ecstasy
Clash cymbals, stab your chest with sacred pine,
cut at your scar of manhood, scream and whine
Leave war to men Why strive to wrench apart
the Empire and two brothers one at heart?
Rather recall your former trade and try,
to make them kiss

I've sketched the reasons why
Eutropius turned a consul, keen to mar
alike the Army, Law, and Calendar

FESCENNINE VERSES ON THE MARRIAGE OF THE EMPEROR HONORIUS TO THE DAUGHTER OF STILICHO

The Evening Star beloved by Venus is lighting
with Cyprian beams the troth these two are plighting
The bride is anxious her maidenly shame appears
her flame red veil is damp with her innocent tears
Grapple her, lover, for this is the girl to match you
although she fights to escape and threatens to scratch you
For he that is scared of the thorns must acknowledge forbidden
the honey that Hybla in clefts has tauntingly hidden
The coward will never taste of the scents of the spring
Thorns arm the rose and the honey bee lifts a sting
By quarrelling coyness we measure the coming laughter,
Venus goes running to make us go running after
When the girl is weeping we catch the prettiest kiss
How often you ll say, ' I d rather by far have this
than ten times beat the *Sarmatians with yellow hair* '

Mingle your breaths and warm into love you pair
the new born truth that henceforth your breasts will share
O let your twining fingers entwine your vows
as close as ivy on flowering chestnut boughs
as close as vines embracing a poplar tree
And let your kisses given and taken be
softer than those of the doves with their plaintive cry—
and learn as soul meets soul on your lips to lie
while the hands of sleep are soothing your panting frames
O warm the purple sheets with your royal games
bravely ennoble with richer and virgin red
the coverlets Tyrian-dyed on your marriage bed
Then leap from the wetted sheets in victor-delight
showing the wounds of the battle of love by night

Through all the hours of the dark let flutes resound
and the crowd indulge in their jests no longer bound
by the rigorous law Ho sport with your officers now,
soldiers wherever you are as the rules allow!

Sport with the lads, you girls, wherever you are!
For this is the voice that echoes from star to star:
over the peoples, over the seas, it has cried:
Handsome Honorius takes Maria as bride.

TO JACOB, COMMANDER OF THE HORSE: A CHRISTIAN

By the door of old Peter, the ashes of Paul,
stop mauling my verses, duke Jacob, I call!
So may Thomas protect you, a good-enough shield,
Bartholomew squire you when gone to the field,
the foemen by Judith be startled to flight,
Susanna the chaste be your strength in the fight,
the tribes crossing Danube be given no quarter
like Pharaoh's brave horses that died in the water,
the sword of your wrath stab the Goths to the heart,
the blessing of Thecla ward off every dart,
and blood never dirty your hands after all—
Stop mauling my verses, duke Jacob, I call!

ON A GOUTY CRITIC

You cannot stand, yet confidently speak.
Who're you to judge of feet, sir? and to grumble:
"This verse is lame and trips, that foot is weak."
The gouty man thinks everything must stumble.

ON THE TOMB OF A BEAUTIFUL GIRL

The Fates bring beauty down, they wish to demean us.
The highest falls quickly, the noblest are suddenly brok
Here lies a girl whose limbs were the limbs of Venus.
She was so glorious, rightly envy was woken.

DESCRIPTION OF THE HARBOUR AT SMYRNA

The city in our scene confronts a placid sea
nd veils the mountain-tops. The headlands swerve around
nd hold the harbour calm although the north winds sound.
The sea is here disarmed by the engirdling ground.
nd learns to take its rest in sure tranquillity.

IT IS A SCENE FAR AWAY

Afar in a mighty kingdom lies a nook of friendly soil,
island which shuts off the waves and their ceaseless din.
e side comes sickling round it, and the baffled waves
ecoil,
l the steep arms hug a harbour of peace within.

THE HIDDEN LAND

wnere Cyprus looks to the Ionian Sea
a crag hangs shadowing. Closed to men, that calm.
It faces Pharos and the seven-mouthed Nile.
The sparkle of hoarfrost dare not scarf its edge,
nor the winds beat it, nor any clouds defile.
Venus and pleasures own it. The angry seasons
are exiled. Spring eternal holds it blest.
The height slopes to a plain; a golden hedge
encircles; yellow metal folds the meadows.
This country was the price the Smith god pledged
(men say) for kisses: a fond husband's fee.
Lovely it gleams, untouched by labouring hands,
yet blossoming always. Zephyr farms the land.
Into its shade no bird may wing but those
who pass the test of Venus. They who please her
flit through the boughs forbidden to the rest.
For loving live the very leaves: each tree
knows its sweet season-of-love. Palm bends to palm,
mating, and poplar thrills with poplar-pain,
alder to alder whispers, plane to plane.

THE LOADSTONE

Bring me the man who sweats to scrutinise
the world, the seeds from which all lives arise,
the cause why suns are dusked and moons expire,
why comets show their threat of crimson fire,
where winds are laired, what forces shake and cry
from bowelled earth or jag the splitting sky,

why thunder blares or rainbows flower with light—
then, if our minds can grasp such things aright,
I'll ask a question

There's a common stone,
dark hued and drab the Magnet It's unknown
on glistening throats of girls or braided hair
of kings or jewelled belts that soldiers wear
But note its marvellous properties you'll claim,
though dull, it beats a gem of lustrous flame
or pearls from seaweed on the Red Sea shores
It sucks at iron through its stony pores,
iron with eager kiss it hugs and needs
if it's to wake its hidden power it feeds
with iron's rasping contact Left alone,
it languishes, a feeble famisht stone
and all its fluid strength is drained away

Mars with his spear of blood creates dismay,
and Venus gives us comfort in despair
A common shrine of gold these lovers share
Each has an image Mars in iron stands,
Venus a magnet carved by skilful hands
Duly the priest enacts the marriage-day
A torch leads on the choir the doors are gay
with myrtle, spilth of roses hides the bed
and scarlet marriage cloths are fitly spread
Then, lo, a miracle! Her beauties draw
the lover up—the scene that heaven saw
when under him with wanton breasts she gasped
Her arms enfold his helm she keeps him clasped
from head to foot, and stirs with close embrace
He feels afar her breath of summoning grace,
the secret net his jewel bride has cast
Then Nature signs and wedged the iron's fast
The twain are mated suddenly at last

What is the pulse of warmth that thus controls?
What harmony compels these stubborn souls?
The stone desires the touch beholds its mate,
the iron gently feels the urge of Fate

Thus Venus in her beauty can assuage
the fiery god who longs for wars to wage,
and draws his flashing sword to whet his rage
Alone she dares to face his snorting horses,
to calm his stormy heart with softer forces
Then peace returns Forgetting battle-dooms,
he bends to kiss her; helmed with ruddy plumes

Terrible child, has then your might no end?
Snatching the bolt of power, from heaven you send
the Thunderer to bellow in the deep
Now crags and shapes wherein no senses sleep
you master now your arrows wound the stones
Rocks show obscure desires, and iron owns
your magics, which through veins of marble creep

THE POOR LOVER

Now poverty and love connive to take me
O hunger I could bear, but love will break me

THE RAPE OF PROSERPINE

i *The Poet*

My brimming mind now bids me boldly sing
the chariot horses of Hell's raping King
darkening the stars the gloomy bride array
that claimed the Maiden You profane away!
The frenzy sluices my mortality
I am the god s, his presence breathes in me
I see the quivering shrine with heaving base,
the threshold richly glows and I can trace
his radiant coming Deep in the earth there wakes
a gnashing din. the fane of Cecrops shakes,
Eleusis waves its holy torches high
the serpents smoothly rise from where they lie,
with collar fretted necks, and glide along
stretching their crests of rose towards the song

O look at triple-headed Hecate
afar: and with her, ivy-crowned, I see
glistening Iacchus. Round his limbs he draws
a tiger-skin with gilt and knotted claws—
leant on his thyrsus, strolling drunkenly.

You gods, for whom the mob of countless dead
are slaves in idle hell: whose maws are fed
with all that dies on earth; whose realm's made fast
by wan-lipped Styx, while Phlegethon flows past
with foam-tosst falls and steaming water-rings—
show me the Mystery of your sacred things,
the secret of your world: what trap was laid
by Love for Death; how came the spirited Maid
with chaos for her dower; and how in pain
the Mother searched for her on hill and plain—
whence Man, once tasting corn, thought acorns rude
and left Dodona's oaks for better food.

ii. *The Divine Tapestry*

With girlish voice she sings, and sews (to please
her absent mother) vain embroideries.
Her needle pricks the elemental chain,
the source, the natural laws that still restrain
the ancient strife and guide the seeds of force
aright. The frailler take a skyward-course,
centrewards fall the heavier. Aether glows,
Earth rests, Light spins the axis, Water flows.

She mingles hues. The stars with gold she dowers,
purples the sea, and gems the shore with flowers.
Like crested waves the inwrought threads go curling:
you'd swear the seaweed round the rocks was swirling
and breezes hoarsely slid on thirsty sands.

Then the five zones. Crimson the midmost stands,
the haunt of heat. So parched and stiff it's found,
the threads are sapless like the withered ground.

Then the two vital zones, where mildness reigns
and men may live upon the yielding plains.
And then the world's grey end, where colour's lost
in endless stretches of eternal frost.

She paints the dark lair of her uncle Dis,
the menacing shades. Ah, something is amiss.
She fears and weeps, though why she cannot tell.
Then round the edge she winds the ocean-swell
with shallows bright as glass.
But now the door
admits her mother, and she leaves once more
the tapestry. Soft rose invades the white
to burn her crystal cheeks and set alight
the torch of maiden blushes. Ivory,
tinged Tyrian red by Lydian girls, is she.

iii. The Nurse's Tale

They sought the hills; the deathless grass they crossed
for flowers of dawn; the fields were grey with frost
and silence on the thirsty violets strewn.
But when the sun had climbed the crag of noon,
the island shook, with gloom the skies were smeared;
then rumbling wheels and stamping horses neared.
No one could see who came; some thrall of death
or Death himself. The horses' blighting breath
withered the grass, the streams: it left a trail
of horrible rust. I saw the bryony pale,
the roses die, the lilies wilt. Then back
the chariot turned upon its roaring track,
taking its pall of night. We saw the sun,
but no Proserpinê. Their business done,
the Goddesses had left; but there we found
our stricken Cyanê upon the ground,
wreaths on her neck and blackened on her brow.
O what is wrong, and where's our mistress now?
we asked, for she had seen. What man had come?
Nothing she said, dissolving to a scum

of dribbling matter Water soaked her hair,
her legs and arms flowed loose, to our despair,
and, washing round our feet, she drained away
The rest are gone The Sirens in dismay
have flown to the Peloric coast, and there
have turned in wrath their music to a snare
for men Their voices, echoing on the deep,
anchor the ships, and oar blades fail to sweep
But I am left alone in dragging age to weep

iv *Death's Wooing*

Cease, my Proserpinê, to sway and moan
with needless fears I give a prouder throne,
and worthily I take you for my wife
I am Saturn's son I rule all shapes of life
Even the void admits my strong design
The light's not lost For other stars are mine,
in other courses, there are purer beams
you'll wonder at Elysian fields and streams,
our faithful folk There lives the race of gold,
a richer age What men on earth can hold
a day, we hold for ever Fadeless flowers
soften in gentle winds this land of ours,
far lovelier than Henna You shall see,
deep in a leafy glade, a precious Tree,
with living gold on boughs of curving green,
sacred to you and you shall be the Queen
of blessed Autumn heaped with yellow fruits
O more! For all that drives in earth its roots
or lives in flowing air or cleaves the seas
or swims the streams or haunts the marshy leas—
all living things shall own you and revere,
all things beneath the moon the seventh sphere
that separates the eternal stars from earth
Kings stript of purple in the common dearth,
shall kneel to you beside the poorest drudge
Death levels all The guilty you shall judge

the good, reward with rest—while rogues repeat
their hidden crimes before your judgment seat.
Lethe is yours The Fates obey your call
Your will be done in all!

v *Marriage in Hell*

The chosen slaves, that know their master's needs,
stable the chariot, unbit the steeds,
and turn them out to graze They draw in haste
the curtains, see the doors with branches graced,
and hang the bedroom with embroideries
The matrons of Elysium come to ease
their Queen, with soothing words they end her dread,
they braid her straying hair, and on her head
they place the veil that hides the troubled blush

The land of greyness laughs The buried rush
to take their festal seats, the ghosts are gay;
garlanded Manês drink in holiday
With song the gloom of silence strangely breaks,
throughout the murk of hell no wailing wakes,
even the night of ages seems to thin,
no more the dreadful urn is judging sin,
lashes no longer hiss, each prison-cell
is quiet, for the pain has ceased in hell

They say that Acheron's dark fountain seethed
with spirits of milk, Cocytus, ivy wreathed,
bubbled with wine, a sweet reviving surge
Lachesis slit no thread of life, no dirge
disturbed the holy choir Death walked no more
on earth, no parents wept, no weapons tore
the warrior, and no sailor ever drowned.
All cities stably flourishing were found.
Sedge in his tangled hair, old Charon plied,
singing, his weightless oars from side to side.

But Hesper now has reached the world of shade.
The bride is fetched; and bridesmaid Night, arrayed
in starry stuffs, stands by, to touch the bed
and bless unshakably the pair who wed.
Then in the house of Death the faithful raise
their sleepless voices in adoring praise:

"Queen of the Dead and Brother of the Lord
(who wed his Daughter), meet in sleep's accord,
entwine your limbs and pledge your mingling fates.
Happy your seed! Enraptured Nature waits
for future shapes of power. O bring to birth
another God, the prayed-for Child of Earth!"

THE PHOENIX

There is a grove on Ocean's edge, withdrawn
beyond the East. There rise the steeds of Dawn,
panting; the whips of light are heard, and through
the water-gates the chariot sprinkles dew.
Thence gleams the Day: the wheels flash far and wide,
and Night, uncloaked, grows wan and turns to hide.
Ah, there the sun's undying Bird is found,
blest in his solitude of desert-ground,
immune from all the ills of beast or bird
and all contagious pangs by men incurred.
(O godlike Bird! the Stars were fledged with you,
and Time you weary, ever born anew.)
No mortal food or drink his body needs;
upon the Sun's pure beams of life he feeds,
and drinks the Sea's rare spray. He stays content
with such exhaled and simple nourishment.
The flame of Mystery lights his eyes; his head
is nobly haloed; from his crests is shed
the Sun's own power, which cleaves the night with fire
serenely; and his legs are red of Tyre.
His wings outfly the Zephyrs, and their hue
is dappled gold enriching flower-like blue.

Unborn of earthly seed, he shows in one,
both Uncreated, Father blent with Son
To fecund Death he gives his ruined frame
and kindles life within the funeral-flame
But when a thousand summers tint his wings,
a thousand winters bleach, a thousand springs
restore the leafshade that the autumn shears,
he yields to the accumulating years
and sinks at last, as when, storm tossed on high,
a pine of Caucasus, that hates to die,
heels with its weight and cannot bear the strain,
and worms of time have broken all its strength
The Bird's bright eyes are dimmed, they glaze at length
with frosts of age as when the moon's upborne
on clouds that drift across her fading horn
His wings, that skimmed the sky, now flap the earth
Seeing his end, he plans a second-birth
Dry herbs from sunny hills he takes, and weaves
from Saba's Precious Tree a pyre of leaves
and heaping branches, since he knows his doom
must find within the flame both tomb and womb
There, weakening he reclines when all is done,
with honeyed chirps of prayer he calls the Sun,
begging that fire will bring his forces back
Then Phoebus, pausing in his chariot-track,
hails from afar his loving child below
"You that in pyres consume your years' that know
life's face in masks of death' that save and bless
your life by dying, ashed to youthfulness'
O quit the corpse of Fate, take life once more,
and change your form, more lovely than before'"
He shakes his head and cast a golden hair
to touch the ready Bird and fill his lair
with lightning life The Bird in rapture turns
to meet the death where life's redemption burns
Struck fragrant from the heavens, the branches blaze
devouringly The halting Moon dismays
her milky heifers, the revolving Spheres
are stilled, as death's womb opens, Nature fears—

she aids the immortal Bird and warns the fire
to save the Glory of the World entire.
Then energy wakes each scattered limb again;
new tides of blood are surging in each vein;
the ashes gyre with life; they stir, unstirred;
the cindered mass is feathered to a Bird.
The Father gets his Son on his own loins,
himself the Son. A breach of burning joins
these two continuous lives, the twins of Fate.

Straight for the Nile he hastes to consecrate
his father's Ghost, the lump from which he rose.
Swiftly to Egypt through the sky he goes,
bearing the ash beneath a grassy pall;
unnumbered birds come thronging at the call,
huge flocks that cloud the heaven with their wings
and darken earth with swerving lines and rings.
But, of them all, there's none that dares to soar
beyond the odorous King that they adore.
The eagle (squire of Jove) and hawk obey
the truce forbidding all to fight or prey.
(Thus, jewelled, by the yellow Tigris' banks,
in silks the Parthian king leads out his ranks,
garlands his tall tiara, bits with bold
his charger, wears a scarlet robe enscrolled
with rich embroidery, and swells with pride
to see his countless slaves on every side.)

There's an Egyptian town; its fame it owes
to worship of the Sun; its temple shows
a hundred pillars hewn from Theban stone.
There on the altar-place the Bird is known
to set his father-relics, he adores
his Lord the God; then on the flame he pours
the Seed and Remnant of Himself. A glow
bursts from the shrine, and Indian perfumes flow
as far as the Pelusian Marsh to shower
upon the sense of man their saving power,
and steams of nectar from that altar-pile
sweeten the Seven mouths of darkening Nile.

Blest heir to your own self! Death breaks our lives,
but knits yours up afresh; the pyre revives
your strength, and kills your age alone. You've seen
the turning past of earth; whatever's been,
you've witnessed. You were there when floods were spilt
to engulf the crags beneath the ocean-silt.
When Phaethon smashed the sun, the world in flame
saw you unscathed and joyously the same,
and only you. The Fates have ceased to twine
your skein of life that laughs at their design.

THE OLD MAN NEAR VERONA WHO NEVER LEFT HIS FARM

Happy is he that owns ancestral lands
where all his days from youth to age are cast.
There, where the baby crept, the old man stands
and sees, beyond his farm, the years go past.

For no tumultuous miseries he craved;
no unknown waters slaked his wandering thirst;
the seas, for gain or pay, he never braved;
with raucous lawsuits he was never cursed.

His inexperience looks upon the stars
more freely, ignorant of the town nearby.
The changing crops are all his calendars;
apples mean autumn, spring a blossoming sky.

The sun goes down and rises still from earth,
and toil is all the clock that makes his day.
He knew the acorn whence the oak had birth,
and groves are ageing with his locks of grey.

Somewhere in India is Verona mapped,
and Lake Benacus the Arabian Sea.
Yet still the greybeard finds his strength unsapped,
and grandsons watch him bustling sturdily.

Let others seek Iberia, thewed for strife.
They know more ways, he knows the way, of life.

RUTILIUS

ADDRESS TO ROME [1]

Queen of a world that you have made your home,
amid the sky of stars, come hear me, Rome.
Mother of manhood and of godhood, hear.
within your shrines we feel the heavens near.

You still we sing, we'll sing while fates permit.
All men, alive, remember what you've done.
Our hearts shall never cease to honour it
till evil ruin blackens out the Sun
For like the Sun your power maintains the earth
belted by Ocean on the east and west
Like Phoebus you've surveyed the spreading girth,
your steeds of purpose go with his abreast
You dared the flames that burst from Libyan sands,
the armoured North with ice and bitter shower
Wherever Nature stirred with living hands,
the earth gave up a pathway to your power

You brought the nations one great fatherland,
you raised the savage with your taming hand,
broke him, but gave him laws to be his aid
A City of the scattered Earth you made

O Venus was the mother of your race
and Mars the father that your founder knew
You warred, but mercy was your conquering grace,
as if a watchful god were training you

In exultation thus you fought and spared
crushed those who frightened, loved them when they bowed
For Olive Maid and Vineyard God you cared,
and Him that first across a meadow ploughed

Rightly your shrines reveal the God that cures
and Hercules grown nobly god at length
O clasp the world with victory that endures,
feed us with law, a common bond of strength

The Roman pilgrims throng from every side
Freely the burden of your peace they bear
The moving stars, eternal, wakeful-eyed,
have seen your empire matchless anywhere
The furthest East has felt you conquering
Assyrians and Medes have knelt in awe,
on Parthian lord and Macedonian king
you've brought through varying fates one reign of law.
More hands for aid more souls you did not need
Justice was yours, an ever widening plan
For *righteous war and lofty peace can't lead*,
alone, to crown the full estate of man
Great is your power, and yet your worth's more great
your mighty deeds surpass your glorious fate

ADVENTURES BY THE WAY

I

Red in the dewy skies the mists of day
were burning as, full sail, we left the land
From Minio s shallow mouth we sheered away
the entry, seething showed the treacherous sand
Graviscae next we saw, a remnant place,
where summer ague s left a town of graves
yet, thick around, the woodlands we could trace
and pine trees tossed their shadows in the waves

We saw the fallen walls the ruins hoary
of Cosa with no man now left therein
I m sorry griefs have so absurd a story
but it's absurd and I can't stop a grin
They say the citizens were hunted out
by hordes of rats, who put them all to rout

ii

Umbro we reached: a fair-sized river here,
where ships come huddling at an angry sky.
The port is easy, any time, and clear:
a refuge when a sudden storm swings by.
I wished to land. The peaceful spot appealed,
but "Let's go on," the sailors all demanded.
Then, though we hurried, wind and daylight failed
and, with no choice of movement, left us stranded.
For sleeping-space we landed on the shores.
Camp-fires of myrtle-wood soon warmed us up;
and tents we built, as best we could, with oars,
and passed a strengthening pole across the top.

iii

Elba was sighted, famous for its mining,
as rich as Noricum with its iron-stores,
or Biturex where steel is tempered shining,
or even Sardinian soil that's soaked with ores.
And iron can be turned to good devices,
more than the yellow gravel of the Tagus.
Gold is the deadly means of spreading vices.
The blinded gold-lust raises sins to plague us.
Deceit to hearts in wedlock it will teach;
the virgin opens to the golden shower.
No well-walled town is safe, which gold can breach;
it goads ambition with its maddening power.
But iron tames the ragged barren tract.
For early men it cleared the living way,
and saved them when the savage beasts attacked·
no murders blotched that first half-godded day.
Man is too weak if he is man alone;
he needs more hands, these hands of iron force.

All round, the sailors' shouts were hoarsely blown,
but, brooding, I forgot the tedious course.

Nearing Faleria, we put by our hurry,
though only halfway round had gone the sun:
Romping around the fields, the folk were merry,
easing their toil-worn limbs with pious fun.
Day of Osiris' Resurrected' Day
when for the seed's new life we beg his aid'
Strolling, we reached a farm, and halted, gay,
by a delicious close with pond and shade.
The sprightly fishes from all sides were seen,
so clear the water and the tank so spacious,
but soon the farmer chased us from the scene,
the rancorous tenant of a place so gracious
Aye, here a bitter Jew in fury farmed,
a creature cut from breaking common bread.
His trees and fishweeds we had touched and harmed,
we'd spilled and spoiled his water, so he said
Our full opinion of his race we told
they snip the cover of the noblest part—
root of all errors' sabbath-rites they hold,
cold stuff, but not so icy as their heart.
They pass in idling sloth the seventh day,
since their poor god got weary then and sat.
The other mountebank things these liars say
won't fool a normal child—I'm sure of that.
Would that the Roman generals never sacked
with might of legions that Jerusalem Town
They spread the plague more broadly by the act.
The conquered nation brought the conquerors down

iv

So, to Capraria at length we came,
a slum-hole where the owl men lurked in stone.
Monks do they call themselves, a Greekish name,
and drag out lives unwitnessed and alone.
They shrink from fortune's gifts and fear her blows.
Who, to miss poverty, poverty would choose?
What mad perversity such action shows·
to fear life's ills and yet its good refuse.

Closed in themselves and hid in slave-yard cells:
is it their fate, or bile that blackening swells?

v

Through Vadi's difficult canal we floated,
holding midstream (the water's shallow here).
The pilot kept close watch ahead, and shouted
instructions to the poop, which way to steer.
One channel alone avoids the shoals beneath,
the mud and sand; two trees reveal the place.
On these are bay-boughs fixed, a lofty wreath,
with tangled leaves an easy mark to trace.

Much weed and scum about the trees are piled,
but still the bay-leaves show the channel's course,
and here a storm arose, abruptly wild,
cracking strong forest-trees with splintering force.
We ran for shelter till the tempest's end,
I sprinted to the villa—of a friend!

vi (*Gorgo*)

This isle with cliffs which showed a recent fall
now holds in living death a man I knew.
Our friend, on many benefits he could call,
high birth and wealth, a splendid marriage too.
Goaded by Furies, men and gods he left,
buried within this shameful hole alive.
He thinks his heaven is glad when men are daft;
it's not his will, but outraged gods, who drive.
I ask, were Circe's venoms worse designed?
They changed the body only, this the mind.

vii

The farm looks down upon the saltworks there;
for so they call the salty marsh below
The sea comes in through channels dug with care
while to the store-pools little ditchways go.

And when the dogstar all his heat unlooses
and earth gapes thirsty and the grass looks sickly,
they keep the sea away with closed up sluices
until the drying pools turn crusted thickly

viii (Pisa)

Still these good people hold the antique ways—
long may their magistrates reflect their courses,
as Decius does, who earns such sterling praise,
the noble sprig of old Lucilius' verses,
aye, the old poet lives here still and shows
his face in this his son's But that's not curious
These playful dangerous satires equal those
of Juvenal or Turnus when most furious

A moral sense his censures recreate
he teaches virtue, flaying those who stray
He, as Imperial Treasurer, of late
kept all the environing harpies well at bay
harpies whose talons strip the world to-day,
and, what they stickily fumble, bear away

FLAVIUS MEROBAUDES

ON THE SECOND BIRTHDAY OF THE SON OF AETIUS

The second year with spread array
brings back the lad his holiday
when the first wisps of life were seen
and skiey strength he drank right in

Now, Latin Muses come and nourish!
Now, Latin Bushes greenly flourish!
The thresholds burgeon Laurel-crowned,
goat bitches trail the circled ground
With placid swell the Tiber blesses,
nor, red and roughening distresses
the shallows, fine this winter tide
The Leader shrugs his wars aside

LORDS OF LATIN

The lords of Latin speech we know.
Vergil, Livius, Cicero,
Terence, who rules the comic show,
Plautus, who, born in roughshod days,
surpassed the Greeks with merry plays,
and Varro, though we blench to note
the shelves of volumes that he wrote,
Sallust, who shines with brevity,
and Tacitus, whose style must be
admired for skilful fluency,
Petronius, tending (while we laugh)
in the Massilian Parks the Staff
of Life—Priapus' other-half,
and Ovid, poet lewd, who went
from fame to Scythian banishment
for cloaking in Corinna's name
a royal girl unsafe to claim

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10 *Concepts of History* We saw how the two great ideas of this epoch—Rome's eternity and the coming world-end—met and struggled and merged in the collision and synthesis of pagan and Christian attitudes It is time now to look a little more closely into this collision

The idea of world end was basic in Christianity It had a pagan history before it emerged with vastly increased force in Christian attitudes, but the important point was that with Christianity a powerful mass religion had put it in the very foreground of its beliefs "Throughout the Roman Empire those who frequented temples pricked up their ears at the news of the approaching end of the world The Stoics declared that the decrepit cosmos would be renewed by fire In the crypts of the Pythagoreans the coming of the Great Year was waited, a new race of men should come down from heaven, and Nature should be renewed in her pristine

innocence In the underground basilicas of Mithras, the Apocalypse of Hystaspes,[1] the father of Darius, foretold the Last Judgment and the conflagration of the universe John strikes a far more peremptory note in his Apocalypse, and displays an assurance, the splendour and force of which can scarcely be equalled "[29] Two centuries before our epoch a scribe had enlarged the utterances of Daniel (presumed to be a contemporary of Hystaspes) with visions predicting the end of the world as propaganda to raise the Jews against Antiochus Epiphanes New prophecies modified and filled out Daniel, expressing the passionate, smouldering hunger of the Jews for liberation Christianity was the final great outburst of this hope, following on the failure of the *Imperium* to bring freedom

But these imaginings were by no means limited to the Jews The concept of the Last Judgment came into Judaism and Christianity from Persian religion, and in the ferment of fierce prophetic images at the time of the war between Rome and Cleopatra the East was agitated by endless verses about world ends and saviour heroes and divine mothers—of which Vergil's *famous fourth Eclogue is one offshoot*[30]

In the first period Christians were sure that the end of the world was distant only a matter of days, and this attitude was liable to revive at any moment of severe crisis In my opinion, it is probably a fact that proto-Christians burned down Rome in the days of Nero Gilbert Murray, writing of the fourth century, remarks "The Christians were still, as in Apostolic times, pinning their faith to the approaching end of the world by fire They announced the end of the world as near, and they rejoiced in the prospect of its destruction History has shown more than once what terrible results can be produced by such beliefs as these in the minds of excitable and suffering populations, especially those of eastern blood It was widely believed that Christian fanatics had from time to time actually tried to light fires which should consume the accursed world and thus hasten the coming of the Kingdom which should bring such incalculable rewards to their own organisation and plunge the rest of the world in everlasting torments To any respectable pagan such action was an insane crime made worse by a diabolical motive "[31]

Educated Christian attitudes, as the Church took in more of

classical culture, could oscillate between the simple apocalyptic expectation and a more philosophic analysis, to which the fact of political and social decline gave an indubitable element of truth[32] Thus, Cyprian moralises in a rather vague way, he believes in the coming blast of judgment, but does not expect it before to-morrow morning

This evil [of disunity] my faithful brethren began long ago but to-day the dangerous losses caused by it have increased and the venomous plague of perverse heresies and schisms has started to shoot out and flourish more than ever before So it must be in this period of the world s decline even as the Holy Spirit warns us speaking by the mouth of the Apostle

All that was foretold in the past is now being fulfilled and both by men and time is it approved for the end of the world draws near As our adversary grows more and more fierce, error deceives folly puffs up envy inflames ambition blinds impiety depraves, pride inflates discord angers and wrath hurries headlong down[33]

Something of the same attitude appears in Christian poets like Juvencus, who announces that Golden Rome will some day come to her end, but who is not very disturbed by the end's imminence

With the military weakening of Rome in the fourth century, and the fall of the City itself to Alaric in 410, a new crisis sets in and ideas of world end sharpen[34] Christians, as well as welcoming signs of world end, have to meet the polemical point that the State's recognition of Christianity has been promptly followed by disaster, fifteen years after the death of Theodosius, the extirpator of paganism Rome had fallen The apologists take varying viewpoints Salvian born at Trèves,[35] who became a priest at Marseilles, wrote a work, *De Providentia*, an attempt to "justify the ways of God"[36] He takes the line of attack on the Roman world as hopelessly corrupt and acclaims barbaric integrity—the generosity, chastity, and honesty of the Germanic tribes (though he admits the perfidy of the Goths and the lying of the Franks!) He cites as proof of Roman vileness the veniality and cruelty of officials, the oppressions of the local councillors who have laid the tax burdens on those least able to bear them Even when the imperial government has tried to lighten the exactions, the rich grab all the benefit Salvian declares that all the rich and powerful men of Aquitaine, with their slave establishments, live as if in brothels The leading citizens of Trèves, he

says, were rolling drunk with the enemy at their gates Only the monastics, he holds, have any sustaining moral basis, the mere church-goers are all compromising hypocrites Even men devoted to a strict religious life are corrupt within "they abstain from sexual licence, but they don't abstain from greed and rapine" They won't give to Christ, and Christ, cries Salvian, is the poorest person in the universe, since he feels the needs of all the needy

Orosius, a Spanish priest, who fled from the devastations of the Sueves and Vandals, arrived at Hippo in 414 and met S Augustine, who recognised his zeal and ability, and who asked him to deal with the charge that Rome fell through abandoning her old religion Orosius therefore collected all the stories of human misery, and argued that the ravages of war, plague, earthquake and famine had been worse in the past He insists that the world of his day is exaggerating sufferings which are no worse than "the ticklings of night fleas"[37] This is to stray far from the creed of impending world end It leads to the attitude that God has been guiding the world out of evil discords into the Roman system, which has been bettered if not perfected by the elevation of Christianity to the State religion In a more confused way, Orosius leads to the same positions as those we have noted in Prudentius

The importance of the work lies in this fact that it is a universal history with a guiding plan "The original idea dominating this compilation is the providential plan the successive falls of empires is willed by God, their ruin prepares the way to the Roman Empire, the triumph of which is the necessary condition for the expansion of Christianity These views have enjoyed an immense vogue which lasted up to the seventeenth century (Bossuet)"[38] But the secular traditions of Greek and Roman history have been thrown overboard There is both loss and gain

A greater man than Orosius tried to go further in divining the hidden pattern of Christianity S Augustine, who put Orosius to his task, was seriously perturbed by the problems raised by Rome's fall Volusianus one of the highborn intellectuals who clung to a mild paganism had asked in a discussion group if the injunction to turn the other cheek could be reconciled with the policy of a ruling State—in short, whether Christianity had

not led to an anti civic state of mind which meant decay and collapse S Augustine wrote a reply to a friend of Volusianus He denies that Christian doctrines are hostile to the security of the State, he argues that the old Roman morality had long ago been worm eaten as pagan moralists and poets themselves testified Only the Cross had saved men from sinking back into an abyss of sin and corruption Only the Christian virtues (voluntary poverty, chastity, kindness, justice, harmony, piety) could keep society going—more, they led from the earthly commonwealth to the heavenly commonwealth which men reach by faith hope, charity The early Romans did not know the true God, but a certain integrity led them to establish a city of earthly justice Now, with the failure of the State built on mere moral virtues, Christians must accept the fact of their mere sojourn on earth and bear with those who found the State on vice's impunity [39]

From this exposition grew the *City of God*, written 413–36 He draws together all the arguments of the Christian apologists, and develops them on a grand scale Out of his vast unwieldy book emerges the vision of a dual historical movement, the process of building the earthly and the heavenly cities The two cities are related in that on earth even the most devout Christian is a member of the earthly city, because the State is a penal necessity of original sin, but he is also a member of the heavenly city in so far as he is truly Christian and realises in fullness the life of unity in the Church which is the body of Christ After arguing that calamity is a natural part of earthly existence, Augustine goes on (Books xi–xiv) to deal with the origin of the two cities and then (xv–xviii) to demonstrate 'their process or progress' Finally (xix–xxii) he discusses the "appointed ends" of the two cities, the goal to which they move and the consummation in which the logic of their processes necessarily culminates [40]

The idea derives from pagan sources The Stoics had conceived of the Universe as a *Polis* or *Civitas* a universal society in which men realised their own essential unity and their further unity with the life of nature [41] Cosmopolis was the living whole With Marcus Aurelius a split appears in the conception he opposes the actual city, the City of Athens to the City of God

Elements of division, latent in the Stoic conceptions—in the opposition of the just man to the irrational world—come out into the open. The next stage is that of Augustine, where all the ingredients of the idea are raised to a far greater intensity and related to a moving structure of history.

To unravel in detail Augustine's picture of the relation of the two cities needs careful analysis. For the two cities interpenetrate in many ways; not till the Last Judgment will they be winnowed apart. The earthly city is not simply the State, since in actual fact the forms of society are always mixed up with elements which transcend them; and the heavenly city is not simply the Catholic Church, since at any given moment that Church will be aspiring towards the heavenly city, but will be weighted with elements from the earthly city. Only at the Last Judgment will Church and Heavenly City be one. Augustine, in short, is trying to define history as a conflict of two opposing principles, which in time and space struggle together and move into new harmonising relations, into new forms of conflict, but which never entirely coincide or entirely separate.[42]

Thus ideally for the righteous all things should be held in common, and the early Christians approximated to this ideal. But sinfulness continues; greed cuts across the ideal; private property exists, partly as a punishment, partly as a remedy for greed; and so the dominium of private property is part of the necessary order of the organised State. It is an evil, and yet in the working out of the struggle it is a form of righteousness, since any other way lies anarchy, the chaos of brigands.[43]

This example will give some idea of the subtlety of Augustine's argument. From one angle he is apologising for the Church's inability to actualise unity and love, for the discords and inequalities of the world; from another angle he is concretely dealing with the necessities of the historical situation, in which both an ideal of brotherhood and an acceptance of all sorts of divisive ways were required if society and man were to continue progressing—indeed, surviving at all.

I cannot go on to discuss the enormous influence of *The City of God* on subsequent thought, on the central conceptions of the whole medieval period, on the relations of State and Church, on the minds of Gregory the Great and Charlemagne, Abelard

and Dante.[44] But in passing I should like to mention that its teaching on private property passed to Gratian and the canonists, and led to their formulations that private property is not a primitive or natural institution; that it originated in sinful greed; and that its sole title rests in custom and civil law.[45]

As part of the increased attention paid by Christians to history, there were written works, like Eusebius's *Chronicle*, which sought to work out a correlated story of human development from all available texts including the Old Testament. There is a genuine extension of vision in such an attempt, even if the results are uninspired. Add to it the sense of an evolving pattern which Augustine tried to define; and we are in a new dimension. Aeschylus and Lucretius and many another pagan thinker had visualised human development as a steady increase out of savage levels through the arts and crafts. What the Christians now added was the sense that all this development was moving towards some great culmination. Prudentius declares:

> Does not a gap twixt man and animal fall?
> The beasts find goodness here and now; but I hope.

And Augustine brought to bear on this change of attitude a profound psychological sense, a subtle dialectic of the interplay between the uniting and dividing factors in experience, in history.

The next stage was to pick up afresh the prophetic intuitions which had burst out so powerfully in Revelations, that earliest Christian document, which gives the main clue to Christian origins. Using the prophecies, Christian thinkers sought to define a number of arcs in the full human curve, to distinguish ages, and to relate the whole movement to the divine plan (creation and fall, rule of the Law, redemption and rebirth into liberty, Last Judgment and destruction of the "earthly city"). The continual sense of crisis leads towards a theory of basic changes going on in history. Gregory the Great wrote in the first sentence of a letter to Emperor Phocas: "Glory to God on high, who, in accordance with what is written, changes the times and transforms kingdoms."[46] A typical expression appears in Bede's *De temporum ratione*, which mixes astronomical and historical material. It deals with eight ages, into which history is divided. The first six are described down to the reign of Leo the Isaurian; the sixth

is the present age, a weary and decrepit age which is trembling on the verge of world end With the seventh will come the unending Sabbath, the eighth will bring the blessed resurrection and final righteousness (How the style lifts and laughs with rhymes for the advent of the eighth age. *Et haec est octava illa aetas semper amanda speranda suspiranda fidelibus*)

Irrational as the approach is there underlies it a profound intuition of the structure of experience and of the conflicts and resolutions of history It denies the concept of life as a mere kaleidoscope of the same elements combining falling apart, and recombining It sees a process and a structure, it sees the emergence of a more complex meaning and unity out of the struggle, the death and the defeat, the enriched return of life To bring these basic intuitions into full fusion with a scientific method has no doubt been a difficult matter We are still only at the beginning of such a development But without these intuitions we should not even have made a start

It will be clear, then, that these new concepts of history were the result of a complicated interaction and merging of pagan and Christian attitudes Not only did pagan philosophy—and images of the heavenly city which go back to Babylonian astrology and Egyptian theology—contribute to the picture The peculiar depth and subtlety of Augustine s whole method lies in the way he brings together the Christian concept of the Church as the body of the righteous and the Roman concept of the necessity of a social *ordo* The pagan idea of the Eternal City is as basic in his thought as is the Christian idea of Brotherhood Augustine draws together all that is most vital on both sides and creates something new On his formulation the medieval world was erected and much of his method passed indestructibly into the very texture of European thought

11 *Concepts of Evolution* Embryonic ideas or intuitions of evolution may be traced back in many directions they come out with special clarity in some Stoic and Epicurean trains of thought Lucretius gives the finest expression to these more or less direct scientific attempts to state an evolutionary scheme But in order to beget the modern science of evolution the old schemata of Greek science had to be broken down and the mass of popular

initutions, which emerged most strongly in Christianity, had to burst irrationally and violently into the general stream of culture. Just as Galen, the pagan scientist, shows the effect of these forces in his notion of organic purpose, so Augustine shows it in his notion of vital energies, *seminales rationes*.

Augustine argues that when the universe was created, God put into it Active Energies, which are the secondary causes under the First Cause for everything which comes into existence:

> It is one thing to found and order the creature from that most intimate and supreme pivot of all causes, and He who does this is God the Creator alone; but it is another thing to bring about some operation by applying those energies and powers conferred by Him, so that what is created comes forth at this time or at that, in this manner or in that manner.
>
> All these things, indeed, have been already and originally and primordially created in the composition of the elements, but they spring forth into actual existence according to given opportunity. For just as mothers are pregnant with their offspring, so the world is pregnant with the causes of things to be, which were created in it only by that Supreme Essence in which there is neither birth nor death, generation nor corruption.

Despite the metaphysical formulation, there can be no mistaking the stir of evolutionary ideas there. Similarly, in his commentary on Genesis, Augustine compares the development of a tree from its seed by the active vital energy of the seed, and he repeats the argument in dealing with animal life. "In the elements [of the universe] were implanted all those things which in process of time should come forth, whether plants or animals, according to their kind." And later he questions whether man was originally created in the form we now know him or "in some hidden manner like the grass of the field before it grew up." Later again he gives this answer: "The germinal reason of which body He created among those things which were together founded, according to which the human body was to be made when the time for fashioning it arrived." Further passages might be cited to show that these ideas and attitudes are basic in Augustine.[47]

From them came the kindling for the first great scientific movement of the medieval period. Duns Scotus, for instance, dealt at length with Augustine's doctrine and argued that the *rationes seminales* were more than a matter of passive receptivity; they defined rather an active energy in matter.[48]

In the new concepts of history and growth, then, which we have been examining, the necessary break-through is made, the irruption which, however crude and entangled with furious contradictions, can alone provide the basis for further general scientific advance.

5

POETS OF GAUL (FIFTH CENTURY)

1 *Perturbed Christians* Since the discussion of Sidonius and Auspicius has led me into dealing with Gaul of the fifth century, I shall continue in this chapter to cover that time and place, and then go on to the cultural developments in Spain and Africa during the same period

During the troubles the public Schools were broken up, and when more settled conditions returned, they were not re formed "In the third century it had needed the express order and munificence of the emperor to restore the School at Autun, in the fourth, which had also seen civil wars and barbarian invasions, imperial action had intervened to wake up the zeal of the cities and maintain teaching in full force, when calm was re established It is in vain that in the fifth century we seek an equivalent for the liberalities of Constantius Chlorus or the rescript of 376 "[1] However, rhetoricians and grammarians continued to teach, but evidence for organised schools is lacking

Paulinus, perhaps Bishop of Béziers, wrote a verse-dialogue about 408 between two monks, a father and Salmon, his young visitor The elder asks how things have been going in the other's monastery. Badly, its fields and villas have been ravaged—but worse than Sarmatians, Vandals and Alans is the inner plague, sin The monk goes on in a fierce satirical attack on a backsliding trio, who typify the sins which cause the trouble

> Aye Pedius whored He whores The leprous will
> is fixed Pollio envied envies still
> Albus once held all honours in his grip
> now, at the world s end lets ambition slip

It is interesting to see such a vigorous vein of protest, and to find a monk made to attack lack of civic spirit—even though the moral drawn is that since the world is so corrupt the best thing is to

get out of it The phrase "world's end" (*orbis in excidio*) is also worth noting The concept of world-end, once basic in the attitude of Christians, has now become specifically the property of the monastics and their close sympathisers

Paulinus goes on to attack women, though admitting that men egg them on in their vices They don't read Paul and Solomon, instead they like listening to Vergil's account of Dido and Ovid's of Corinna, and they flock to the theatre to hear the mimes of Marullus (Marullus had written in the second century, but seems from this poem to be still played.[2])

The elder monk replies to this tirade by pointing out there are still good people Salmon agrees It's the only consoling fact He asks the father to tell what has been happening in his part, and the father says that he'll do it on the morrow The poem breaks off

Prosper of Aquitaine has been proposed as the author of another poem, *De providentia divina*, which raises much the same problems as the last The wars have been destroying young folk as well as old They have even trampled on the clergy as badly as the laity The poet says that the same issues appear in peace-time as well as during wars, and attempts to find a reason for it all

The style is clear and equable The statement of the difficulties is done in elegiac couplets, then the exposition of God's righteousness in hexameters And the poet explains the emotional reason for the technical change "Lest the unequal verses impede my argument, Pentameter, stretch out to heroic numbers " Whether or not Prosper wrote this poem, he certainly wrote *De Ingratis*, a lengthy denunciation of the semi Pelagian heresy which Faustus had started off [3]

Several attempts were made to write narrative poems on Biblical subjects Rhetorical elaboration inevitably rules here, but fancy often shows itself in a real stir of new associations, in a tentative groping on the fringes of new spiritual dimensions Claudius Marius Victor, a rhetorician of Marseilles, is perhaps the finest of these poets His *Alethia* covered the story from Genesis to the death of Abraham. Its rhetorical approach is not concerned with dramatic action, it seeks to entangle and unravel the events in its

arguing and suggestive web of thought Like other such poems of the period, and like the pagan epics of Claudian, it lacks cohesive structure and philosophic unity, but the poet's mind plays over the surface of his theme, at moments writing mechanically, at moments striking deep, at moments expanding with a delicate insight

His power is seen in lines such as that which defines the birth of Hell God is condemning the fallen angels "As sentence struck the guilty, Hell was made" And the passage I give in the translations, which depicts the feelings of Adam and Eve as they emerge from Paradise and see the rough and tangled world before them, has a gentle, imaginative sympathy [4]

Hilary, Bishop of Arles, composed a narrative poem on the Creation, which he dedicated to Pope Leo He tries to mix the Biblican story with the scientific expository method of Lucretius An amusing touch of rationalisation leads into theological deep waters

> You said ' Let us make Man Tell, Lord with whom
> You spoke' It s obvious Already Your Son
> sat on the soil and looked at friendly Earth

An epigram by Hilary shows the rhetorical paradox used to ra.. problems of "transformation" which seem to refute analytic logic it deals with the Burning Fountain of S Bartholomew near Grenoble

> If truly Fires can burn
> why Waters are you flowing?
> If truly Waters quench
> why Fires are you still glowing?

Another attempt to render the early section of the old Testament in verse is the *Heptateuchos* of Cyprian The story runs in hexameters but the songs (e g the Canticles of Moses) are done in hendecasyllabics

2 *Avitus* Yet another attempt came from Alcimus Ecdicius Avitus Bishop of Vienne from 470 His father may have been he son of the Emperor Avitus whose exploits in defending the Auvergne we have seen detailed by Sidonius and who took generous measures to aid the starving in the miseries that followed

the invasion If so, Sidonius's Ecdicius, the gallant soldier, champion of pure Latin and of the poor folk was the Bishop of Vienne before his son, the poet The latter's hexameter poem is in five books—on the Creation, Original Sin, God's Sentence, the Flood, and the Crossing of the Red Sea Much that has been said of Marius Victor's poem can be said of this one The rhetorical tradition is genuinely breaking new ground, though superficially it might seem to be doing no more than extend its devices to Biblical material In so extending, it perforce brings about something of a new relation of form and content, for no matter how men are clinging to the old forms as the only imaginable technique of civilisation, they are moving into new social and personal patterns There is tension between the old forms and the new life-patterns—a tension which is by no means fully resolved in the poetry, but which keeps hinting at potential resolutions on a larger and fuller scale

Some of Avitus's effects are based in the rhetorical paradox, as when he describes the Nile

> Under skies without a stain
> the River rising spreads an Earthly Rain.

This method may lead to moral and material contrasts to reversals of accepted relations, which startle with a sense of the transformations and transvaluations of which life is capable In the convulsions at the moment of the Crucifixion Avitus sees "night on the height of things, light in the depths"

Or the desire to impress, to emphasise, may lead to a fanciful exaggeration in which a new sense of the movement of things and the entangled active relation of men to that movement may show through

> The race of men rages with broken labour:
> Vain thrust the quarry stones on surmounted clouds
> and vain the structure follows retreating heaven

Those lines describe the Tower of Babel, but how many overtones of suggestion do they also carry! One can feel in them already the whole cosmic entanglement of the cathedral, the success and *failure of the medieval world and the advent of a new mathematics* No doubt in saying all that I am reading impossibly

more into the lines than Avitus could have intuited or meant; and yet the lines do certainly look towards the future I have mentioned rather than back to the world of classical geometries and delimited proportions.

And when Satan sees Adam and Eve, freshly created, in Paradise, his long outburst echoes on into a Miltonic world rather than looks back to the classical models on which its idiom is superficially founded.

> Once virtue was loftily mine, now I am fallen,
> outcast, and clay takes up the angelic honour.
> Earth holds the Heaven Raised by a trivial link,
> the loam is lord Our power, transferred, is dead.
> No, is not wholly dead A weighty portion
> retains its force and flaunts its virtue of evil. . . .

In a poem, *De Virginitate*, Avitus writes to his sister, who had entered a religious life, and bids her read the Christian poets; but he only cites Prudentius by name. Prudentius is the Christian poet he seems most familiar with, though he knew the Phoenix poem attributed to Lactantius as well as Juvencus.

A rhetorician, Paulinus of Périgueux, attempted the narrative poem on a more contemporary theme. He versified the life of S. Martin of Tours, basing his narrative on the prose of Sulpicius Severus; but his work does not reach the level of Marius Victor or Avitus. Avitus, it is worth mentioning, does not show in his prose the controlling virtues which his poem at its best can boast. In prose he sinks along the confused line which we traced in Sidonius.

3. *Paulinus of Pella.* There remains Paulinus, the grandson of Ausonius, who left a long personal poem, *Eucharisticus*. Born at Pella in Macedonia in 376, he was taken on to Carthage nine months later when his father was promoted to the proconsulship of Africa. In his third year he went to Rome and thence to Bordeaux (379) There he was educated. After the elementary stage, he read Plato, Homer, Virgil. He tells how difficult he found the bilingual basis. He seems to have had a boyish desire for monastic life, but just as he was settling down to study, he was stricken by a fever; and on doctor's advice he had to concentrate on exercise. He went through a normally indulgent

youth, till his parents intervened to suggest marriage He married, it seems, as a mere social act, but found a lively interest in organising the neglected estates which came to him with his wife On to his easy life burst the barbarians (about 406) His father died, he was involved in lawsuits with his brother, Bordeaux was sacked by the Visigoths Paulinus's house was plundered The puppet Emperor Attalus did not make things easier by appointing him Count of the Private Largesses Paulinus fled from his burned down house to Bazas But Bazas was besieged and Paulinus was almost assassinated He managed in his attempts to get away, to help the townsfolk by detaching the Alans from the Goths

He meditated going off to his mother's estate in Macedonia but his wife refused to go In desperation, he decided to abandon world and family by becoming a monk But some "holy men" deterred him

> Aye how much clearer than myself you knew
> my nature and my ways you proved by thwarting
> a plan beyond my strengths I longed to follow
> you seeing it all yourself took better measures
> and stopped my aims that looked too high by far
> a life designed on the monk s perfect pattern
> though full of loved relations was my home
> who seemed to have the right to claim from me
> my usual care sons wife her mother all
> the fair sized number of their servantfolk
> whom to expose in bulk to foreign lands
> *jarred on affection reason piety*

That hopelessly confused sentence has packed in it all the doubts and divided loyalties of the common man of these days Paulinus underwent a course of penance and on Easter, 421, felt fit to take Communion His fortunes however kept getting worse His mother in law, mother and wife died his sons left him to make their way in the world at Bordeaux where they too died He retired to Marseilles and tried to farm a small property there That failed and he went back to Bordeaux, presumably to hang on in dependence But an unknown Goth paid a price for the Marseilles estate, and saved him from beggary

He writes his poem of *Thanksgiving to the Lord* in his eighty-third year—459 It is lumbering heavily pondered involved in

a confused tangle of clauses and parentheses. The poet does not express himself at all easily in verse; and yet some dogged conviction, some inner need, is driving him to use the verse form. He tries to use the traditional rhetorical devices; and though he lacks the originality to make something new of them, there are many signs of a new force which is introducing a slightly unexpected emphasis. Repetition of key-words, internal jingles to bring out contrasts or connections, and at times a proliferation of alliteration. All these effects are ultimately derived from rhetorical prose, but they are wrenching loose from their original bases. The hexameter is to some extent breaking up into new patterns which are as yet powerless to emerge, but which make themselves felt as a kind of confusing and disrupting force.

The historical value of Paulinus's poem needs no emphasis. No other work gives us anything like so complete a picture of what the barbarian invasions meant to ordinary people—that is, people of the articulate, educated classes. The people below that level, the peasants and the slaves, are submerged masses under these turbulent currents, of which we gain only dim, generalised glimpses from time to time. In the tale of Paulinus we see the strength of the secular system which the work of Ausonius and Sidonius reveals as so stubbornly persisting among the educated and well-off; we see the slow break-up of that system and the way in which the material break-up involved a heavy slow contested disintegration of traditional attitudes and feelings. No very definite conclusions are achieved, technically or spiritually; and yet the organising centres have shifted. Paulinus feels himself a chastened man, very different in his derelict old age from the gay, self-indulgent lad he once was, and yet the essential difference eludes him. The obscure struggle which kept driving him into the desire of monastic escape is only imperfectly expressed in his pious idiom, as the new expressive forces are only imperfectly incarnated in his plodding hexameters where the hints of realising emotion are indissolubly mixed with the clumsy confusions.

One interesting point is the fact that Paulinus always speaks charitably of the Goths, but becomes bitter now and then about his Roman friends and relations:

and suffered a certain amount of vexatious treatment from the bishops

S Martin himself is a very interesting character As a young soldier, he divided his cloak with an ill clad shivering beggar at Amiens and dreamed that he saw Christ clad in the halved cloak He was baptised and left the Army, and attached himself to S Hilary of Poitiers To be near Hilary and the highway from Poitiers to Saintes, where he wanted to preach, he built a wooden hut on the River Chain The people of Tours wanted him for their bishop They enticed him by a trick from his hermitage The anti Martin party, led by a bishop, objected to his rags, his tangled hair, his dirty clothes, but the pro-Martin party, which included the mass of the citizens, won the day by means of a chance verse turned up from the psalms which was taken to denounce the bishop Martin became Bishop of Tours against his will, 372, and, two miles from the city, founded his famous monastery

Sulpicius wrote a *Dialogue*, a *Chronicle*, and a *Life of S Martin*, in which he sets forth all the faith healing and other wonder-works of his hero but which is also an excellent work of biography The *Chronicle* belongs to the millenniary school which we have already discussed above at the end of Chapter 4, and shows a close study of Daniel and Revelations Sulpicius also corresponded with Paulinus of Nola and in one letter he tells how S Martin always picked out Paulinus as the shining example of the true Christian of the day since as the Lord advised he, though rich and possessing much had by selling all and giving to the poor, made possible by his example what was impossible " Paulinus sent him a splinter of the True Cross (brought home by S Silva of Aquitaine) and a set of verses to inscribe on his walls Sulpicius though living simply was a literary eremite, and was lent some slave amanuenses by his mother in law

From the *Life* we gain a full picture of the strenuous missionary work of S Martin as he hewed down the holy trees of the peasantry, or rebuked a devil who was foolish enough to pretend to be Christ in sumptuous purple dress or interpreted the sea-gulls after fish in the Loire as types of evil powers after our souls S Martin had also his more amiable side He saved a hare from some hounds and he did his best to protect the heretic Priscillian

from the bishops who demanded his blood (Priscillian and some followers, including the wife of a Bordeaux professor and her daughter, were condemned to death by the Emperor at the request of the bishops Martin protested He would not at first communicate with the bishops, whom he considered guilty of murder, but the Emperor made his communion the price of holding up any further persecutions, and Martin gave way But he felt he had lost spiritual power, and kept away from all subsequent meetings of bishops S Ambrose also broke off relations with the men who had led the persecutions) Sulpicius points out that the martyrdom of Priscillian helped to spread his sect, who buried the bodies of their martyrs with great pomp and used the words "By Priscillian" as the strongest of oaths "But among our folk there burst out an unceasing war of quarrels, which after fifteen years of dissension could not yet be stopped" He blames it all on the lust, greed and quarrelsome spirit of bishops

He also mentions false prophets in Gaul and Spain The one in Spain began by calling himself Elias, then declared himself Christ, and got at least one Spanish bishop to worship him Sulpicius adds "A large number of brethren also told us that at the same time a man in the East appeared who called himself John From all of which we may guess that when so many false prophets arise, the coming of Antichrist approaches, and that he already works on them the mystery of iniquity "[6]

5 *Monks* The story of S Martin and of Sulpicius Severus shows the potential element of clash between the monastics and the established Church That element we saw appear earlier in a confused form in the fight between the Donatists, with their wandering zealots, and the Catholics in Africa In the fifth century the general disorder and despair led to a vast increase of men and women who felt it was no use struggling to build up a secular existence and who yearned for the end of the world and its apocalyptic renewal Jerome, despite the intense revulsion which made him flee from Rome to a recluse life in Palestine, remained the champion of the established Church against all disrupters, and he attacked the monks as well as the doctrinal heretics He writes to the virgin Eustochium

Avoid also the kind of men you see in chains, with long hair like women and beards like goats, with black cloaks and bare feet even in cold weather. These are all the tricks of the devil . . . When they find their way into the houses of the wealthy and deceive little women who are loaded with sins . . . they put on an air of sadness as if from long fasting, but they feed up during the night.

He tells her of some genuine monks in Syria, but says that those in his parts are quarrelsome men who compete in fasting, but then go on to brag about their asceticisms. "They are out for show in everything. They have loose sleeves, rough shoes, and coarse robes. They sigh repeatedly, visit virgins, and slander priests. And when a feast day comes, they gorge till they vomit." When S. John Chrysostom became Archbishop of Byzantium, he drove out the flocks of monks from the city and the "sacred virgins" from the priests' houses. Augustine, in his *De Opere Monachorum*, says that the monks sell limbs of alleged martyrs, tell lying tales, and demand "a fee for their lucrative poverty or a reward for the pretended holiness." Cassianus declared the wandering monks "a venomous plant which entered the Church from Ananias and Saphira."

It was to meet this menace to the Church that Benedict set about devising the monastic discipline of his Rule. He mentions four types of monks already common: the cenabites (living a communal life apart), the hermits, irregular monks, and the vagabonds. The irregulars live in small groups without a rule, and "whatever they think or desire they call holy, and what they do not want they say is unlawful." As for the vagabonds, they rove from province to province "satisfying their own lusts and in search of good food," the worst of the lot. That the attempt of Benedict to impose a Rule which would bring the monks safely inside the Church's fold was not at once successful is shown by the remarks of Isidore of Seville in the early seventh century. He describes three good classes and three "vile." The reprobated classes are the irregulars and wanderers. "Circumcelliones who rove everywhere in monks' robes, carrying their hypocrisy into all provinces. . . ."

No doubt many of these monks were lazy rogues; but what the champions of the Church disliked in them was at least in part their economic rivalry and their capacity to become

heresy spreaders North Africa had shown how the unattached monks in moments of crisis could create disorder and insurrection by demanding a return to the gospel message of renunciation On the whole, however, the Rule of Benedict carried the day and made monasticism safe for the Western Church [7]

CLAUDIUS MARIUS VICTOR

ADAM AND EVE LOOK ON THE WORLD

Ah, with what eyes, what feelings do they stare
Paradise yet quick in their minds? Their grief
springs not from the thickness of evils confronting
their senses but from the memory of good
Now that grace of the holy grove gleams more serenely,
now the blest wood with more queenly plenty spreads
its riches, now the apple bite is sweeter,
the nectarous juice, now earth with living flowers
breathes and pierces them with the missing scent

BIRTH OF SPACE

The first Day of the Sun Light's seeds were sown
They spread with rosy sparks their purple tresses
The moon night's honour, gleamed with her own light
or took her lesser path beneath the sun
catching his rays and stricken poured them back
The stars painting the heaven with zones distinct,
winked out their various colours, Heavenly Flowers
The sky came flaunting out with gorgeous darkness

EARTHLY PARADISE

Here all that Nature shows in scattered spots
is massed together in a single fullness
The woodland wavers with a gentling wind
which blends a medley of odours in one nectar,
new bounty which no tree can claim apart.
Each trembles with a bland and gradual murmur,

lifts with its shaken leaves; the wide wood sings
a hymn to God. The sigh, harmonious, whispers
a single song.

ESCAPE FROM FEAR

He only from the might of God may flee
who flees to God.

THE CONTRADICTION

They lacked the vice and blemish of the world,
quick with their godded minds and needing nothing.
The substance of the whole was rich within them,
all wealth that earth can yield. Their bodies bred
no dark diseases, and they ate for pleasure
since they were safe from hunger.
If they'd kept
intact the Lord's command, the cruel stroke
of death, the bitter pangs, would still be distant.
But, ah, the cunning Snake persuaded Eve,
deceitfully, to break the Law of God:

"Poor human creatures, blindly kept from seeking
a better life: what's good, no man may know
who knows not evil. Why, he can't distinguish
even how good from good is sifted out.
So God denies to man the right of plucking
this holy fruit, lest, the mind's cloud withdrawn
he lift his eyes to heaven and know the highest
and be as gods."

PAULINUS OF PÉRIGUEUX

EXHORTATION TO A LONG POEM

Lo, a new sea is spread, with favouring breeze.
Midst of the tides I'll draw my cracking boat.
While I'm delighting in the easy seas,
rashly my skiff on ocean drifts afloat
or weakly driven finds the shore nearby.
What course for my wavering prow and me will save?

On cry the winds, and *back* my fears reply
Let's take, since earth is far, the way of the wave

As Martin's spirit a calm breath diffuses
and aids the traveller lightly on his trail,
the blessed breeze fills out the drooping sail
So far, as yet a monk's career I told,
I hugged the coast Now come the deep-sea cruises
a great priest's tale and message I must unfold

PAULINUS OF PELLA

HIS LIFE

Childhood

At last my wanderings reached their rambling end
My ancestral land, my grandfather's house,
carried, I saw Bordeaux where tidal waters
are drawn by lovely Garonne inside the walls
with ships along the passage to discover
a spacious harbour in a spacious city
  There my grandfather, consul that same year,
before my third year went, I learned to know
  And when this period ended and rising vigours
filled out my puny frame, my mind more conscious
learned through experience the use of things,
as far as I recall, I must narrate
the ascertainable facts about my life
  What else then of those years of boyish growth
(which freedom play and youth's high spirits seemed
able to fill, inherently, with relish)
O what more gaily revive or fitly dare
to insert in my small tract (hammered in verse)
than affection's work, my parent's notable zeal,
clever at seasoning lessons with enticement,
and their wise forethought, with all due control,
that coaxed me to good living and its means
and pressed quick knowledge on my unformed mind

Almost with the first alphabetic signs
I was taught to shun the ten marks of the dunce
and every reprobated naughtiness
And though this method of discipline's discarded
by what's no doubt a fallen age, I like
that antique Roman system, I admit,
and therefore find my old-man's life more easy.
Early, when I was nearing five full years,
I was put to learn the tenets of Socrates,
Homer's war-themes, Ulysses' wanderings
Then straight I was bid to go through Vergil's works
before I'd properly gained the Latin tongue,
used as I was to chat with the Greek servants,
my intimates through linking years of play,
Too heavy a task it was for me a lad
to grasp the point of works in unknown language.
This double learning fits a stronger mind
and those who master it earn a twofold halo,
but its broad burden crushed me, now I see,
and drained a vein too poor in its resources
So much, despite me, my rash page betrays,
my ill-judged page, unasked-for, which I publish,
yet which, I trust, won't make me blush for matters
I strive to set forth in a written record
For so my chaste and cautious parents taught me
from boyhood on, lest, some day, my repute
be maimed by any man's malignant whispers

Youth

Back to my course then and the seasons spent
in years when sunk in literary study
I gladly told myself that I was gaining
some profit, prayed for, from the labours lavished
by Greek and Latin tutors on my ignorance
and that some day (perhaps) I'd prove my progress,
had not a sudden stubborn quartern fever
defeated all my steady lesson learning,
when I was hardly fifteen years of age

But when my parents' love for me was panicked
(since my enfeebled body's cure they rated
more urgent than my lessons in fine speaking,
and doctors from the first stroke had advised
continual bright devices of amusement)
my father planned my health's return so keenly
that though he'd lately slackened in his hunting
(and that he'd done, in fact, to help my studies,
not to distract and lure me to his pastimes,
averse from pleasures which I couldn't share)
on my account he hunted more than ever
and tried afresh now all the sport's diversions
to help me woo and win my strength again
These games, protracted through my convalescence,
produced in me a sharp distaste for letters,
soon a fixed habit, when my health returned
and with it love of the deceitful world
in which my parents fondly acquiesced,
enough delighted at my strength restored
So, with my growth, my fickle tastes increased,
I readily took the way of youth's desires
a handsome horse equipped with splendid trappings
a long legged groom, a swift hound, and a hawk
goodly to look at, and a gilded ball
brought fresh from Rome for use in pitching-games,
clothes of the latest cut, and choicest myrrh
from Araby to scent each novelty
Also, grown strong, I loved a lively gallop,
riding a racer many a headlong tumble
his mercy saved me—rightly Christ I credit
for guidance then, though (sad) I knew it not,
mazed in the urgent ambush of the world

While wavering twixt these loves and the desire
my parents had to see me carry on
their line, I felt at length belated heats
and into the full lusts of youth I burst,
lusts which as boy I d thought were easy things
to curb And still, so far as wanton ways

admit discretion, and accept a bridle,
lest I should drag worse troubles on my faults,
I straitened passion with this prudent rule:
Don't take a woman unwilling, or another's,
and so preserve a reputation unstained,
don't touch a freeborn woman though she offers,
take only slave-girls bedded safe at home.
Better, I thought, such cases of lewd courting
than cases in a court and good name gone.
Though this too of my deeds I'll here confess
one son I know of, born about that time
(though neither then, nor later, did I see
a bastard of mine, as soon enough he died)
when freedom banded with youth's lusty lures
might more have gained me and my future damaged,
then, even then, you watched above me, Christ.

Thus, from my eighteenth year, I learned to live
and thus continued till my twentieth's end
Then, though, as I confess, I much resisted
my parents and their love, inured by habit
to easy indulgence, they compelled me change
my ways and take a wife whose property lay
in splendour of name, not present ease of fortune,
since her estate was thickly involved in troubles,
neglected by its old lethargic lord,
to whom succeeded (when her father died)
the grandchild, she who now had wedded me

Early Manhood

But, once resolved to bear the bidden toil,
youth's eagerness working with my mind's design,
I in a few days was content to enjoy
what the estate could yield I forced myself
and all my thralls to turn from lazy ease
to unusual toils I set a good example,
and those who wouldn't follow it I drove
Tirelessly working in my accepted station,

I straightway hustled fallow fields to tillage
and laboured hard and fast to bring new life
to exhausted vineyards in the way I'd learned,
and (though to many this feels most annoying)
I outright paid my taxes coming due,
all of my own free will, and soon had earned
a certain leisure for my later quiet.

Too highly this I prized, and though at first
it fitted with my nature's moderate needs,
it turned to luxury, lost to higher aims
I wanted a fine house rich with spacious rooms,
with quarters suited for the varying year,
a glistening table, piled, a mob of servants,
all young, and furniture meeting every need,
plate precious more for workmanship than poundage,
craftsmen of all sorts, prompt in execution,
stables all stocked with well-conditioned beasts,
and sumptuous carriages for safe travelling

Misfortune

But after I had passed my thirtieth year,
came the blank misery of a double toil,
a general grief at society's disaster
(when foes invaded the bowels of Roman rule),
with private sorrow in my father's death
for the last days which hedged his failing breath
were practically those of ruptured peace
But all the havoc foemen brought my home,
great in itself, was slight beside the grief,
the enormous grief I felt for my dead father,
who had made my home and country dear to me
For truly by our mutual services
we'd joined our lives despite the differing ages
beyond the loves of men whose years were equal
He, then, so close a friend and trusty adviser,
was taken from me in my early youth,
and straight my froward brother caused a wrangle

and bitterly fought my father's valid will,
contesting the special clause which benefited
our mother; and to guard her interests
caused me concern as great as natural,
my zeal for justice fed by stronger love.

Besides, unfortunate rumours of my losses
got round and left me exposed to worse attacks
amid the smiling lures of vain ambition
and all its forfeits joined with pressing perils.
The memories hurt me, all these long-past matters
I'd rather leave close-shrouded in deep silence,
yet the comfort of Your good gifts realised
in my adversity, Christ, compels my song
and brings them from my heart's depth to the light
declaring Your bounty after abundant ills

The Invasions

On me especially, with a second country
waiting me in the East (where I was born
and held a landlord of a large importance)
mishaps took hold, which long I'd merited,
since absent unwilling on protracted travels
I was kept by slothful drag of my attendants,
not to mention jarring wishes of my dear ones—
oft too by conflict twixt their wills and mine,
whenever recurring dread of wavering issues
disturbed by some bad chance our fresh arrangements,
besides, my habits of ease alluring me,
my old repose, I clung to special comforts,
my home, alas! too fully and sweetly heaped
with all delightful charms in roughening days,
and nothing lacking but a Goth for guest

Which lack soon brought disaster on my head
since no direct authority as protector
resided there, the host retreating pillaged
my house, for well I know some generous Goths
strove honourably to save their hosts from harm

But then on me, beside the mentioned misery,
a cause of far worse trouble was unloosed
the usurper Attalus, feeling for support
(in vain), imposed upon my absent self
high meaningless titles Count of Private Bounties
he made me, knowing no salary was attached
and he no longer had faith in his own rank,
dependent now on Goths he did not trust,
who gave him back his life but not his power,
while on his own he held no strengths at all,
not one resource and nothing of an army

What drew me on was not the tottering tyrant,
but hope to make my own peace with the Goths,
peace which the Goths in general then desired,
others soon gained, though buying at a price,
without regret, since many now we see
prospering in our State through Gothic favour,
though many suffered first what men can suffer,
and I not least, who lost in one sad blow
my property and outlived my fatherland.

For the Goths, evacuating our city, at
King Ataulf's command (though we'd received them
in friendship) treated us most harshly, burning
the whole place down, as if a battle-prize
where, finding me (a Count still of that Prince
whose allies they'd not rate among their own),
they stripped me of my goods, and then my mother,
both of us caught up in the same mishap,
and thought it was a grace to us their captives
that we were left uninjured to depart,
and certainly not one of the servant-maids
who'd followed faithful in our train was hurt,
affronted in her honour or assaulted,
still I by heavenly aid was spared a worry
of worse extent, because my daughter (wedded
a while back) now escaped the general dread
through having left our country, gone abroad

Yet even past these bounds our misery went,
as I've remarked. When we were driven out
from our ancestral home, with house burnt down,
the enemy caught us trapped in Bazas town,
my own, my family's town, which they besieged;
and far more serious than surrounding hosts,
a pack of slaves conspired with reckless youths,
declassed, abandoned, though of free estate,
and raised in arms to slaughter all the gentry.

This too, just God, you saved the innocent from,
and quelled with deaths of some few guilty leaders;
and him who'd sworn to take my life, you ended
without my knowledge by another's hand,
binding me still to you with further gifts
for which, I felt, I owed you boundless thanks.

But then the shock of this so sudden danger
(heavy with chance of murder in the city)
led me (too scared, it's true) to worse mistakes
and hope that (were I shielded by the King
whose folk were pestering us with lengthy siege)
I might escape from the beleaguered city
with the large company of all my dear ones:
and into this attempt my hope decoyed me
because I knew it was the Goths who forced
the unwilling King to harry thus our people.
  So, to investigate, I left the city
and, no man blocking, hastened to the King,
with spirits higher ere I started speaking
to him, my friend (I thought), who'd favour me.
But when I'd probed his mind as best I could,
he said he couldn't help me there outside;
he too was compromised now he had seen me
and couldn't let me go again unless
I took him with me back into the city;
he knew the Goths had further plans against me,
and wanted to break free from their control.

I admit the terms he stated left me gasping
and frightened at the dangers closing round,
but with God's aid (who's present everywhere
to those who pray), I pulled myself together
and trembling, boldly strove in my own interest
to fix the plan of my yet-wavering friend,
discouraged terms so hard they'd mean rejection
and pressed for action on attainable matters

All these the prudent man approved, accepted,
and when he'd talked with leading citizens
hurried to settle in a single night
with aid of God, whose gifts he now enjoyed,
to succour us as well as his own people

Then the whole mob of Alan women flocked
from their abodes, beside their warrior husbands
The King's wife went as hostage to the Romans,
and with her went the King's most favoured son,
and I too, as the peace-terms had agreed,
snatched from our common foe the Goths it seemed
The city-bounds were hedged with Alan soldiers,
ready, for pledges given and received,
to fight for us whom lately they'd besieged

Strange was the city's look, with walls unguarded,
closed round with crowds confused of men and women
who lay outside, while, clinging to our walls,
barbarians stood, fenced in with steel and waggons

But, seeing their forces now so largely lessened,
the encircling host of Gothic ravagers
straight felt they could not safely linger longer
when closest allies turned to sudden foes
They dared no more attempts, but chose at once
a quick retreat And soon our allies too
(whom I've described) decided to depart,
though ready to honour the pact they'd made with us,
the Romans, through all thick and thin of chance

At length I chose Marseilles for a short stay,
a place with many saints most dear to me,
and a small property left from our estates
I'd no great hope of fresh returns, no tilth
tended by settled labourers, no vines
(on which alone that city is dependent
to get from elsewhere all the things it needs)
but a small city house with garden near,
an allotment, refuge for my loneliness,
owning some vines and fruit-trees, but no soil
worth tillage Yet a trifling labour's outlay
drew me, with care, to till the vacant part
of that exhausted earth, about four acres,
and build a farmhouse on the ridge of rock
(so I'd not use up soil where things could grow)

More, for the outlay, which life's needs require,
I hoped to earn it by the rent from land
as long as I'd a house well stocked with slaves
and active years yet gave me strength unfailing
But later when in both respects my fortunes
changed for the worse in such a fickle world,
I was broken, bit by bit, with age and trouble,
and wandering, poor, bereaved, I easily turned
to new designs, and wavering to and fro,
thought a return to Bordeaux might relieve me,
and yet my project did not meet success,
though with my prayers expediency was joined

PAULINUS OF BEZIERS

THE INNER PLAGUE

The cave has grassy seats, leaf framed with vine,
built with live sods, where Brothers may recline
Then, Salmon what's your luck for all your pains?
how fares the land? what joy in it remains?

Smashed is the bond that kept life free from harm
on meadow, wealth of man, and tenant-farm
weighs the barbarian What avail appears
in marble mansions then for lengthened years?

Turn to the inner plague, the war of fears
which numbs us with its thickening cloud of spears
That foe's the worst, who fights unseen of all
Yet, while Sarmatians waste and Vandals brawl
and Alans ravish, we have set our will
with hopes ambiguous and sick efforts still
on building ruins to a world we've lost.

But what, once gone, we'll weep for to our cost,
we quite neglect We let our souls run waste
with listless thistles Aye, we kneel disgraced
and yield our hands to manacles of sin.
Come, cut the briars from the mess within,
the twisted doors and broken windows mend,
plough up the soul's broad meadows, deep, and tend
the shattered splendours of the captive mind

No bitter hunger, no disease or blindness,
no foe is lacking What we are, we were
Through all our trials, constantly we err,
sheltered beneath our vices, with no limit.
Profit alone is holy Worth? We dim it
with the Expedient Vicious meanings fill
Right's Dictionary Thus, the Miser still
claims *Thrifty* as his surname

S ORIENTUS

DEATHROLL OF A WORLD

Murder in ambush or in open brawls!
Starvation strangles those whom fury spared.
The sorrowing wife with spouse and children falls
In bond with his own slaves the lord is snared

Here food for dogs they lie; or homes on fire
give to the ravished dead a funeral pyre.

In village, villa, cross-roads, district, field,
down every roadway, and at every turning,
death, grief, destruction, arson are revealed.
In one great conflagration Gaul is burning.
Why tell the deathroll of a falling world
which goes the accustomed way of endless fear?
Why count how many unto death are hurled
when you may see your own day hurrying near?

S. AUSPICIUS

THE GREAT MEN

Turn serious eyes abroad,
look on each famous lord
who dies with lusts yet ranging
or lives in midst of dangers.

They snout and yap and quarrel
like greedy dogs. The moral:
they lose what's sought with cares
nor leave it to their heirs.

AMOENUS

AN EGYPTIAN EVOKES THE GOD OF MARTIN

A Ship went sailing once the Tyrrhene Sea:
Romeward was set, full-sail, her hurrying course,
when up a busy wind blew angrily,
packed up the waves and smacked the sails with force,

caught mast and images in its sudden loop
and cracked the yardarm ends and scared the crew
The captain, dazed and baffled, left the poop,
the rigging fell, the sea went yelling past,
the prow dipped deep, the sailors spewed aghast—
hope died, and light, and all man's craft could do
death threatened loud, with safety tottering fast

While all were cowed, a man from Egypt, one
who'd never known Christ's sacraments, cried out
Help, God of Martin! Soon the storm was done,
it wilted and the wild waves ceased to spout,
the toppling billows flattened far and wide
and all the whispering waters lay unmoving
The ship went cheerful on a friendly tide,
and made towards the shore with favouring breeze
Shallows and port the sailors sought with ease
So Christ gives merited honours to His servant
and faith in him controls the earth stars, seas

SEDULIUS

THE PAGANS

Some worship cabbages In prosperous gardens
they tend their drying gods with water Thus,
their cults seem based upon transplanted gods

THE CROSS IS COSMOS

It gathers all Four Regions of the Earth
the starry East is glittering from His Head
the Western Star laves bright His sacred Feet
His Left Hand holds mid pole His Right the North—
and so all Nature's Life is from His Body,
in lordship Christ embraces the whole World

ALCIMUS ECDICIUS AVITUS

LIFE IN THE EARTHLY PARADISE

Meanwhile, unguessing what's to come, their freedom
tastes all things good in peace and fully enjoys
the blessed plenty. Ready earth outstretches
handfuls of food. Unceasing fruits are thick
in splendid bushes of the yielding turf;
and if the branch is burdened with its ripeness
the tall tree bends and offers its mild apples.

The empty shoot swells straight into a flower
and brings a childing promise with new buds.
If pleasant sleeps they seek to crop, they sleep:
on gentle meadows, embroidered grass, they lie.
The sacred grove surrenders every sweetness
for joy, and teems, fulfilled, with powers renewed.
Thus still they feed and try new snacks of pleasure
though hunger cannot urge them.

They see their nakedness and know no shame,
seeing. Untaught, their goodness feels no evil.
For not man's nature causes shame, but sin
Whatever members the good God's created,
only bad use brings aftermath of shame.
But then the candid mind kept vision pure
as in the glory of high angelic life
which (as we're told) inhabits homes of stars.

THE TEMPTING VOICE

Blest Grace of all the world, and loveliest maiden,
the rose of shyness decks your shining body
enwombing future men, the enormous Earth
awaits you as Mother. Certain joy and solace,
now one with life, your man first found in you,
your lord, who's rightly subject to your love,
your mate, for whom you'll bonded bear your children.

A worthy seat on Eden's top you own.
The world's your servant, all its endless life
What earth, what heaven begets, what ocean breeds
in its wild lairs, is granted to your uses
Nature denies you nothing, your power's unfettered
wholly, and I've no envy, only a wonder
that your free touch ignores one tree of sweetness
Who has made this stern command, who grudges you,
and in the midst of plenty sets denial?

6

POETS OF AFRICA (FIFTH TO SIXTH CENTURIES)

1 *Africa* Already in the Introduction I have given some idea of the hardy growths of local African culture and how it was from Africa, under the leadership of Fronto and Appuleius, Tertullian and Cyprian, that a rebirth of Latin literature came about In Commodianus we noted the first full irruption of popular elements in diction and metre, so that his work shows both the coming Romance languages and rhythmical forms of verse in their first embryonic changes

Roman Carthage was a great and busy city which authors of the second and later centuries call the *Soror Civitas*, Rome's Sister It traded extensively in corn, olives, minerals (such as lead from the Valley of the Bagradas), iron, marble slaves from the interior, woollens, purple dyes, leather, woods from the Atlas Mountains Its large mercantile class made possible the existence of considerable numbers of engineers, architects, sculptors, mechanics, lawyers and rhetoricians Africa was a great corn growing land, which did much to feed Rome, and the capitalisation of farming meant as usual the driving of small farmers and labourers into the city to provide a floating and sometimes violent lower class

Carthage with its two harbours, its elevated centre with the chief public buildings, its narrow streets lined with houses of six to seven stories, its cult groves its rich suburbs with parks, and its splendid aqueduct bringing water from the distant mountains, was a city with a vigorous life of its own The new elements which it brought into Latin culture have already been discussed As a reminder of our findings, I shall merely quote Bouchier's excellent summary

The classical rhythm is almost gone the wealth of epithets the assonances and accumulations of words expressing kindred ideas help to summon before

the mind a vivid image which has a certain beauty of its own, similar to the brilliant mosaic work so much beloved by all classes in Africa

Yet this same straining after realism these detailed descriptions may become grotesque or unpleasant as the scene in Nemesianus where the young Bacchus playfully plucks out hairs from the shaggy chest of his guardian Silenus, the medical consultation in the Aegritudo Perdicae or the account Dracontius gives of Cupid feathering an arrow from his own wing Another example on a more serious subject may be sought in Tertullian's fearful vision of the future torments of the heathen. philosophers burning with their disciples whom they taught to believe in God charioteers red hot on fiery wheels tragic actors shrieking louder than they had ever done in life, and many more [1]

2 *Martianus Capella* The great work of the African school was done in prose, pagan or Christian, with the two giant figures of Appuleius and S Augustine to mark the beginning and the end of its greatness We look in vain for any corresponding poet We find a large amount of verse in which the new forces are effervescing, and the general trend of the African literary school had a powerful effect on verse elsewhere, reinforcing trends similar to its own. But whereas Gauls like Ausonius, Paulinus of Nola, Rutilius, even Sidonius, or Spanish Prudentius and Egyptian Claudian have a definite character which comes out through their work, the African poets are rather submerged in a general style or styles The originality lies in the movement of the groups, not in any outstanding poetic personality

Perhaps, after Appuleius, the more radical and passionate attitudes of the Africans led the most potentially creative figures to throw their lot in with Christianity and its expository or organising needs To Italy we find drawn the provincials like Ausonius, Rutilius or Claudian who still kept as the primary clause of their creed the faith in Rome's eternity In Africa the regional patriotism tended to flow into Christianity, which at its outset, we must remember, was strongly anti-imperial In Revelations, "the prophet revels in the punishment of Rome At a distance round the vast brazier that was the imperial city, kings, merchants and sailors mingle their anguished lamentations "[2]

Except, then, for the steady progress of African Christianity, the third and fourth centuries do not show us a very exciting cultural development in Africa. Cyprian (Bishop of Carthage, 200–25) exemplifies the way in which the whole apparatus of

the rhetorical schools was taken into the service of the Church; into his prose flowed the richly balanced periods of the Asianic schools, controlled by a high seriousness. The state into which secular rhetoric had got is shown by the work of Martianus Capella. This rhetorician was born at Madaura, like Appuleius, and lived mainly at Carthage. His precise date is vague, but he certainly wrote and taught before the Vandal invasion.

His work of mingled prose and verse, *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, was written for his son, and is meant to convey in easy and attractive form the substance of the liberal arts. How well it did its job in assembling the elements of the higher education for "limited intelligences" is proved by its history. It became basic in academic courses, was done into German by a monk of S. Gall in the eleventh century, was found in the leading monastic libraries, and was argued over by the scholastics.[3] It acted thus as one of the essential links between early medieval and late Graeco-Roman culture, and made possible the link between Renascence and classical Graeco-Roman culture. Yet the book must be confessed a most tedious and frigid allegory, so tasteless as to be almost readable for "quaintness." It is hard to recognise what is the fact, that Capella is imitating to the best of his ability the allegorical method of Appuleius's *Metamorphoses*.[4]

Worn out and old, it seems, after a gruelling life of advocacy, he begins his work of systematisation, which is completed in nine books. He is humming a tune. His son overhears and asks why. It sounds like a wedding tune. That's what it is, says Capella; it's the tune of a marriage about which Satire has told me to write. The lad is glad that his first fear—that his father is going crazy—isn't true. So the allegory begins. Mercury wants to be married like the other gods. He woos and fails to get Sophia, Mantice, Psyche. Virtus suggests that he enlists the aid of Apollo and Apollo says that, yes, he does know a virgin, a most learned one, Philology. But Jove has to assent. A council of gods is held, with Discord and Sedition excluded. Jove approves of the marriage and wants mortals whose merit has raised them to the stars to become formal gods. Philosophy is told to record the decree.

Philology appears, and consults the future about her marriage. The auguries are good Phronesis arrays her; the Muses sing.

The four cardinal Virtues enter matronly, then the Graces Athanasia comes to take the bride up aloft. But before Philology can rise she has to get a load off her chest; she vomits up a pack of mouldy or hieroglyphical books The Muses collect them Philology drinks the immortalising cup which Apotheosis brings, and goes up to Heaven in a litter Juno Pronuba welcomes her, and they reach Jove's court in the Milky Way Mercury is waiting there The contract and *lex Papia Poppaea* are read, to clear up legal points Presents are given Phoebus leads out the seven Liberal Arts, maidens whom Mercury has provided as wedding-gift. Each amiable maid (Grammar, Dialectic, Rhetoric, Geometry, Arithmetic, Astronomy, Music) is described in her characteristic costume and brought forward to declaim at length on herself

Dialectic is not now the technique of the Platonic *Dialogues* whereby opposing viewpoints mix to beget a new thought She deals with formal logic.

> *Accidens* and *Proprium*, *Aequivocum* and *Univocum* *Substantia Prima* and *Substantia Secunda* There is hardly a reference to the great vivifying thoughts of Greek philosophy Homer, Virgil, and Orpheus sound the lute beside Archimedes and Plato who are turning spheres of gold. Thales is moist Heraclitus is aglow, Democritus is involved in a cloud of atoms. While Pythagoras is threading the labyrinth of certain celestial numbers Aristotle is in anxious quest of Entelecheia among the heights of heaven [5]

We are already among the early medieval scholastics, and the complex vitalities of Greek thought have withered into a few aphorisms Each thinker has had a tag attached to him and interest subsides with the mastery of the complete list of tags The same attitudes can be seen in the summarising verses of Ausonius, which deal with history and philosophy

3. *Vandal Invasion* The latter part of the fourth century had seen a decline in African prosperity, which resulted in increasing revolts among the native tribes A national movement began among the Moors, culminating out of various semi brigand outbreaks Firmus came forward as the Moorish leader, and his revolt (as well as that of his brother Gildo) was only broken by bringing other native chiefs together under the Roman standard against him The provincial citizens flatly refused to serve in the

Army; at Carthage they rose in insurrection at the attempt to enforce the levy. The guards of the province were Moorish auxiliaries and German mercenaries. The middle class of the towns went through the same disasters as everywhere in the Empire, and often Jews or outlaws had to be pressed into the official posts. The popular discontent went into heretical and insurrectionary movements, Donatist, anti-Catholic, anti-imperial. Wandering monks, Circumcelliones, fed the angers and dissents.

Yet the schools did not by any means fall away. From Augustine's writings it is clear how they flourished in his day. "Indeed, Africa seems to have rivalled Gaul as a producer of rhetoricians. The schools of Carthage were equally famous. *Latinarum litterarum artifices Roma atque Carthago*, says Augustine, and Salvian, towards the middle of the fifth century, speaks of 'the schools of the liberal arts, the lecture rooms of the philosophers—in short, all the institutions for training students either in literature or morals.' "[6]

In 429 the Vandals landed. They were joined by large numbers of the tribesmen and the populace, the persecuted Donatists. The Vandals were Arians who could join with Donatists and other discontented elements in a common feeling against the Catholics with their centre at Rome. Thus, by an obscure convergence, regional patriotism and anti-imperial feeling could fiercely merge with doctrinal issues to create an unstable popular movement. (It is of extreme interest that there were contacts in Gaul between the Hun Attila and the insurrectionary movement of the dispossessed farmers, the Bagaudae, the Vargi, the Vagabonds, which at least at times linked up with the murmuring city slaves and craftsmen) The Vandals treated harshly the main supporters of imperial control, the Church and the landlords. The landlords had their estates expropriated, were flung out of the province, or became mere *coloni*. The wealthier clergy were also stripped, and Arianism was set up as the ruling form of worship. But though the Vandals took the best land, they did not organise the farming of it, so that the break-up of the big estates did not have the valuable effects it might have had. The Vandals preferred piracy to trade, and hunting to agriculture. Yet the productive powers of Africa were so considerable that trade and industry did not by any means collapse. Corn was still exported,

and marble-quarrying and iron mining were still carried on Some literary men escaped abroad, others had migrated earlier The important grammarian Priscian, who was born in Mauretania, went to Byzantium as Latin professor, his main work was a compilation on grammar, which in the epitome of Hrabanus the Moor later gained a very wide circulation and strongly influenced medieval grammatical studies He wrote verse also, including a panegyric on the Emperor Anastasius, about 512 [7]

The schools, however soon recovered Though the Vandals used the Gothic Bible of Ulfilas they needed Latin for administrative purposes The Vandal nobles wanted their sons taught Latin The kings were well educated There was a burst of song Not on a very high level, but often showing much lyrical energy and charm The sensuous romantic quality predominates, as if life had taken on a sunset virtue and the earth was washed with a gush of warm lights Dracontius who perhaps more than any other poet was a skilful painter in these hot lush colours, describes how his master Fortunatus led the revival in the schools

> O Master holy father you too must be sung
> who brought back fugitive Letters to the African city
> and mixed in the lecture hall Roman and Barbarian.

Under Hunneric (477–84) one Cato sang of the King's naval enterprises Dracontius came into prominence under Gundamund (484–96)

Blossius Aemilius Dracontius was a lawyer and Vir Clarissimus That his inclination was to belong to Claudian's line of faith in Rome is suggested by the fact of his being thrown into jail by the King for verses which praised the Emperor In jail he had a bad time, and wrote a poem in elegiacs begging pardon of God and the King He also spent his jail time in making a collection *Romulea* two *epithalamia*, and a group of declamatory poems on set themes The title may show that his plea to God and the King was opportunist rather than convinced, since *Romulea* is an adjective of the time for the distinctively Roman values of civilisation The themes are of the type, "The Speech of Hercules on seeing how the heads of the Hydra kept sprouting afresh after he had cut them off" Or "The Deliberation of Achilles as to whether he shall sell the body of Hector"

A theme like the second allowed the declaimer to bring in all the arguments for and against the Immortality of the soul, and so on. The arguments were given without any Christian reference: those for immortality were based on the Orientalising Stoicism which had played so large a part in the thought of the Empire.

In some of the verse contraversia we can see real problems of moral conflict buried in the confused dialectic of opposed contraries which the system of rhetoric kept alive but could not answer. Thus, in the *Controversy over the Statue of the Brave Man*, a rich man does an act of courage and is voted a statue; he repeats his act and is voted whatever he wants, and he asks for a right of asylum to be attached to the statue; he repeats his act a third time and is again voted whatever he wants, and he asks for the head of a poor man who has fled to the asylum of the statue. Such a theme expresses the inextricable antagonisms, the clash of legal and human rights, the way in which the ruling classes, having all things their own way, yet were caught between two opposing principles. The actual situation was for the time being insoluble; the controversy had no answer which did not outrage some necessary aspect of the human situation; and yet the questions were being asked and would have to keep on being asked.

The extravagant but often attractive style of Dracontius is shown well enough in the following lines:

> Aye, if you want the Thunderer himself to burn
> and the lord of heaven appear as a young bull
> *oblivious of sky, lowing again in grass,*
> metamorphosed in meadows Let the rain
> fall gold, the roofs hail riches. . . .

In his poem *De laudibus dei* he attempted to describe the universe and the distribution of beasts, plants, and precious stones. Through this poem—and its rescension by Bishop Eugenius of Toledo—Dracontius survived with the reputation of a Christian poet.

Perdica Lies Sick. Attributed to Dracontius is the *Aegritudo Perdicae*,[8] which is, however, more direct in style. It tells of an ailing lad, to diagnose whose case Hippocrates himself is called in. A careful medical diagnosis is given; but Hippocrates is a psychologist—even a Freudian—as well as a physician. He decides:

You Mother, are the cause Physic must pass
These toils are of the mind!

Love and Shame wrestle and declaim in Perdica's soul Beautiful women are brought in to cure him of his perversion "But none are like my mother," he protests He wastes away in minutely described weakness and decides to hang himself His epitaph shall be "Here lies Perdica, and, with him murdered Love"

4 *African Anthology* In a manuscript of the seventh or eighth century there has been preserved a collection of poems made in Africa about this time The poems start from Vergil and end in a group of contemporary poets The Preface, attributed to Octavianus is an odd style of far fetched words presumably culled from glossaries—a freakish trick coming from the Frontonian delight in unexpected words and leading on to still stranger experimentations in the coming centuries

Many of the poets are grammarians and the minor renascence they represent came in the reign of Thrasamund (496–523) Thrasamund had become thoroughly Romanised he built baths at Carthage on which he inscribed acrostic verses and he was interested in theological disputes He built also a palace and church, and a new city, Allicana was founded near Carthage Five miles off, the king's country house at Chrasis had fine park lands and orchards The theatre revived and Greek plays, probably for the most part in mime forms were given Internal communications were restored and marriage laws enforced

Florentinus sang the prosperity of Carthage and Allicana Felix wrote five epigrams on the Baths at Allicana the last, twelve hexameters long has thirty seven letters in each line embodying an acrostic, a mesostich and a telestich which make up a sentence in Thrasamund s praise That is if you read down the first letters, then the sixteenth letters and then the end letters of each line, you get the sentence *Thrasamundus Cuncta Innovat Vota Serenans* It seems the same Felix who as Flavius Felix Vir Clarissimus wrote to a department chief begging not for mere transitory honours or wealth but for a modest Church prebend to keep him for the rest of his days

Grant my request Save me—I m in the lurch
Give me a post (you can sir) in the Church

Other such poets were Peter the Referendarius, and Calbulus, who wrote on Christian themes; Tuccianus and Octavianus, who have a light touch, even a touch of song, and who carry on the tradition of pagan lyricism; Coronatus, a Vir Clarissimus and grammarian, who wrote a poem on the line from the *Aeneid* (III, 325), "I live indeed, wind life through all the extremes." A riddler, Symphosius, cannot be exactly dated, but probably belongs to this period. He claims to have turned out his pieces as improvisations at Saturnalia parties: which is certainly an overstatement, as they seem old enough stuff. They have interest as leading, directly or indirectly, to the Anglo-Saxon collections of riddles such as Aldhelm's.

Under Hunneric (523–30) lived Luxorius, a grammarian, whose work makes up the last section of the *Anthology*. He was a Vir Clarissimus and Spectabilis of Carthage. His Christian professions do not inhibit his lewderies, some of which have grace, others of which have only lewdery. But amid the set themes for epigrammatic mockery we do get some glimpses of actual Carthaginian life.

5. *The End.* An *Epistle of Dido* gives further evidence of the breakdown of the classical hexameter by the use of a refrain which every few lines makes a pause in the middle of the fourth foot (at the hephthemimeral cesura). Song is beating against the set forms.

Prose also made some progress. Ecclesiastical history was written by Victor Vitensis and Optatus. Planciades Fulgentius wrote a treatise on myths. But the end was near. In June, 533, the Byzantine Fleet under Belisarius set sail, and during September its sailors entered Carthage. The Vandal kingdom fell. Africa came under the control of the Eastern half of the Empire. Ecclesiastical history and Biblical commentary continued, and some theological poems (e.g. Verecundus), but the swan-song of Latin culture in Africa was given by Corippus, a country schoolmaster, who entered the imperial service about 550.[9] He went on some important State missions, and was proud of his rise in the world:

> What I once ignorantly gave a country-voice
> I send now singing to the city-folk.

He wrote an epic, about 550, on John the Magister Militum, who put down the revolting Moors It was in eight books, and was recited at Carthage Corippus is Christian, and though he can't bear to omit the pagan tales, he adds "As the ancient poets tell in Gentile song." He also wrote *In Praise of Justinian* during a difficult moment at Byzantium, intending the poem to help him out Here he sets forth in the vein of Claudian, the Ideal Roman whom nothing can scare or deter from duty, and the role of the Senate is given prominence He addresses Rome

> The God put all kingdoms
> under your feet: they're yours.
> Who counts how oft the Franks in battle were beaten
> and Goths tamed? or tyrants captured, crushed?

Rome for him is still the Eternal City. His style has considerable vigour, and he is well read in the classics But at moments his lines clog and tremble with the new strains making for rhythmical form.[10]

Latin culture lingered on under the Byzantine domination, with an underground Catholic movement, till in 698 the Moslems sacked Carthage Even then a few Catholic clergy remained to tend the relics of the martyrs But Haroun al Raschid Caliph of Bagdad as a mark of his respect for Charlemagne, ordered those relics to be transferred to France, and that was the end The schools had straggled on till the Moslem invasion

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DRACONTIUS

THE ORIGIN OF ROSES

Our Venus feels the pang, in tender haste
fleeing from Mars, unsandalled, through the Spring
Ambushed in pleasant fields a thorn is placed,
her sole is wounded as she's hurrying
The thorn is crimsoned with the blood she shed,
and out of sweet repentance perfume blows.
Through yellowing fields the brambles flush with red,
the brier grows holy with the starry rose

Why, Cypris, flee from bloody Mars, when, lamed,
you find your richly-bleeding sole is torn?
Ah, red-cheeked one, is this the atonement claimed,
that gems of flame conceal the offending thorn?
Then rightly Love's own Queen was caused distress—
since to repay a wrong she needs will bless.

OCTAVIANUS

COME, PAINTER

Come, painter, paint my girl in all her wealth of warming whiteness,
the girl whom Love has painted and who's limned with breathing brightness.
Yes, paint her as she fully is, beneath a silken gown
that bares her hidden body as it finely ripples down.
Ah, love has shaken you as well. The picture's in your heart.
Then paint the sigh of your desire, if you would show your art.

THE WANTON HEART

The flower will not bloom again, the lover's gain is lost
when cheaply bought: but sweet the joy when heavy is the cost.
O if too easily the sheets on beauty's bed are tossed,
the wanton heart forgets the lure, the lover's gain is lost.

LOVE HIM BACK

O what's your way with lovers if they will not love again,
beautiful Venus? Head to foot, in time, all grace must wane.
The dew will come, but violets parch, the scents of roses fade;
when spring is past, the lilies doff their white and droop decayed.
Then take these images to heart: and, when a lover's true,
O love him back, for still he'll love, if still he's loved by you.

TUCCIANUS

SONG AND LOVE

Song begets love, love begets song. We cannot break the ring.
So let us sing that we may love, and love that we may sing.

DOMNUS PETER REFERENDARIUS

VERSES FOR THE BASILICA OF THE CHURCH OF HOLY MARY

How She remained a Virgin still although a son she bore,
and how the Son endured the womb, don't ask as you adore
It's sin to question what you need is faith, and nothing more

TO DULCIS

O blessèd are the parents who begot you when they wed,
and blessèd is the sun whose beams are on you daily shed,
and blessèd is the earth on which with gleaming feet you tread,
and blessèd are the bands which round your darling flesh you tie,
and blessèd Dulcis, is the bed on which you naked lie
As lime twigs catch the unwary bird and forest nets the boar,
I'm harshly trapped by Dulcis now and wander free no more
I saw, and did not touch, I see, untouching still I turned
wholly to flame, and still I burn, however much I've burned

TO THE SAME AFTERWARDS

A thousand times we've clasped! I beg you still to show your grace,
and as you take my strength away restore with an embrace
and charming kisses what you took, and take it back again
warm to the source of life, my girl and if my powers remain,
the process I'll repeat, I'll take once more the pleasant course
But that's enough! It isn't fair if you should stoop to force
and overcome your conqueror; for there are future nights
when willingly I'll triplicate with you our close delights

VINCENTIUS

PHAEDRA TO HER SON IN LAW

Down, shame! I ll speak. No other eyes need see
the secret held by two These lines shall be

the one awed witness Only, Phaedra fears
that he whom she adores may doubt her tears
O hear me out then He, that rules above
bedded his sister What's the crime in love
that keeps the law of life? The child of earth
was born alone we're all akin by birth
Out of one seed and womb we all arise
Then fear no sin, for Cupid shuts his eyes
These lines will prove I tempt, and I alone,
but if you blush at passions yet unknown,
come to refuse me. Let me hope and plead,
feel your contempt and follow where you lead,
kissing your soles that proudly tread the ground
Let love be still my cross, let graves resound
Hippolytus, the name with which I'll die
The Venus load I bear, and glad am I
While willy-nilly, torn, I write this note,
hoping, I lift the halter from my throat.

MODESTINUS

LOVE CAUGHT NAPPING

Outstretched lay Love, held down by wingèd Sleep
in myrtle-shade, in grass of silvery dew
The ghosts of women whom he cruelly slew
came wild from Hades' shadowy Hall, to weep

Phaedra cried, "There's my hunter bind him fast"
Scylla cried, "Cut his hair off for his crimes"
Colchis and Procne, "Kill him several times"
Canace and Dido, "Cut his throat at last"
Myrrha, "Here hang him up," Evadne, "Burn"
Arethusa and Byblis, 'Drown him in his turn"

But Love woke crying, "O my wings, start flying!"

ANON.

HER EYES

O lovely and unquiet eyes
speaking a language all your own—
there Venus and her Lovelings rise,
with Joy between them on a throne.

A KISS

Young girl with lovely hair and glowing face,
softly I slept: you kissed me gently, sweetly.
If waking eyes must fail to catch your grace,
then, Sleep, I beg you, close my eyes completely.

IN A DREAM

By day my eyes desire, my heart by night—
alone I huddle, miserably numb.
Once in a dream you came, but dreams take flight.
You're lovelier than all dreams, if you will come

LEDA AND HER SWAN

The Father, *leaving* Wrath, put feathers on
and sweetly sang, while tranced the maidens stood.
Then Leda laughingly embraced the swan,
discovered God and lost her maidenhood.

A COLD DAY

Serve all the dainties. Let us eat our fill
and try the Venus-course when thirst's allayed.
No shaggy cloak may take away the chill,
for better warmth embrace a chafing maid.

JEALOUSY

Unfair is jealousy. A gnawing fever,
it crucifies at once its own conceiver.

A BOOZER'S DREAM

Phoebus forbade me dreaming to partake
of wine. Lord, I obey. I drink awake.

ON A STATUE OF VENUS

From Venus' breast a bit of greenery grows.
Where fire is pulsing deep, the marble knows.

SYMPHOSIUS

WINE

From *many mothers* I, *though one, derive.*
When born, I see no parents left alive;
they're trampled flat and *wounded everywhere;*
their death creates the power I gain and share.
I cannot hurt the man who loathes my charm,
but those who love me much with ease I harm.

ROSE

In narrow womb *my lovely mother placed me,*
and spreading out her fire-armed beard embraced me.
Though from a pigmy-parentage I'm sprung,
on every side my praises loud are sung.
As I emerge, more charms my mother shows
and forth she brings me with no suffering throes.

ASMENIUS

IN PRAISE OF A GARDEN

Come, Muse, the child of Jove. Disclose
the merits of a garden-close
A garden gives us food for health
and yields its owner apple wealth
delightful greens and herbs enough,
gleaming grapes and orchard stuff
Joy within a garden strays,
and jocund profitable days
Crystal springs send tinkling jets
that feed the plants with rivulets
Flowers shine in grassy borders,
prinking earth with jewelled orders
Bees, with grateful murmurs, sip
the fresh dew from each flower tip
Fruitful vines on elms are laid,
reeds and vine leaves wear one shade,
trees spread arbours everywhere
and check the heat with tangled hair
The singing birds express their joys
and soothe the ears with pretty noise
The garden charms it feeds diverts,
and calms the heart that sorrow hurts
Health is restored. Once seen adored—
pleasure for labour it returns
Manifold sweets the gardener earns

LUXORIUS

ON A BLIND MAN WHO RECOGNISED BEAUTIFUL WOMEN BY TOUCH

Widowed of light with empty eyes,
the blinded lover strays and trips,
but stroking women's tender thighs
he tells by careful fingertips

which limbs are beautifully white.
I do not think he'd ask for sight
since women throng and he can trust
so truly to his skilful lust.

ON A STATUE OF VENUS WHERE VIOLETS HAD GROWN ON THE HEAD

So smoothly here was Cypris shown,
she gave her life to bless the stone:
such warmth on all the limbs she showered
the marble pulsed with love and flowered—
and rightly. Violets at the crown
mean handmaid-roses lower down.

ON A CAT THAT ATE A VERY LARGE SHREW-MOUSE AND DIED OF A FIT

A cat *devoured a mouse of bulky size;*
the swelling dainty caused internal strife.
The cat had lost, although he gained the prize:
death he conceived through jaws that fed his life.

TO A DEACON HURRYING FOR A TAVERN-SNACK

What gullet-goal enjoins you, priest, to race?
Are psalms less pleasant than a bacchic bowl?
In pulpits, not in wine-bars, take your place
and raise on high, not tankards, but the soul.

OF THE GARDEN OF LORD OAGEIS STOCKED WITH ALL MEDICINAL HERBS

High buttressed walls around the garden show,
to charm and shelter. That's the master's plan.
Here vigorously from various seeds there grow
all herbs with power to aid life's healthy need.
Here *Aesculapius' art can wisely* tell
which herbs, selected, cure the ailing man.
Here surely is heaven where powers of virtue dwell;
for through these herbs from busy death we're freed.

ON A MENDICANT MAGE

When with no bread your jaws have met,
as warlock up at once you set.
You seek the tombs, the land of death,
tottering you hold your fasting breath,
Your songs can't raise the ghosts, you chant,
disordering Hell with such a rant,
you starveling, trusting *that*, some way,
you'll bring up Pluto to the day
for pauper-clients O, I pray,
may you be whelmed in sheer perdition,
if body snatching you magician

OF FISHES WHO WERE HAND-FED

Here in the palace pools the home bred fish
with tiny lips each day declares his wish
He knows the call, the Queen's own hand he knows,
and in his lair from side to side he goes
He hates the stormy deep's wild treachery
and shrinks from currents that would set him free
With asking lips that open as they reach
he learns how belly need can tame and teach

ON A GOUTY MAN WHO INSISTED ON HUNTING

Chasing a goat or stag or boar
bowed on *his galloping horse he tires*
and misses scent and catch once more
He likes to be with youth aspires
to act the *laird and holds his breath*
to stifle groans—in vain And why?
he seeks a violent saddle-death
when better home abed he d die

ON A MAN WHO MADE LOVE TO UGLY GIRLS

Myrro selects the girls who're ugly-faced,
and, when he sees a pretty girl, he blenches.
Speak, Myrro. Do you choose in beastly taste,
not northern blondes, but southern darkie-wenches?
But no, I pardon you for what you miss.
Only the ugly ones will take your kiss.

ON A HAIRY PHILOSOPHER WHO SPENT VENEREAL NIGHTS

You're hairy-limbed and hairy-faced,
long bearded to look reverend:
a Stoic Master, loudly chaste,
austerely all your days you spend.
You'd never say that you could bend
to wenches or you'd be disgraced.
But vigils all the night you keep
with lovely girls who get no sleep.
Cato by day, discreetly stern,
at night an incubus you turn.

ON A WOMAN NAMED MARINA

Who wins Marina's love may surely claim
he's gone a deep seas voyage, rollingly.
But we should rather compliment than blame:
Venus was born, remember, from the sea.

TO LYCAON, WHO SLEPT BY DAY AND WOKE BY NIGHT

You're wearied and you cannot help but snore;
the sunlight's loving bounty lacks your praise;
but you awake with hideous night once more
you hate to share the sunlight of our days
If Nature's stricken you with this disease,
you're upside-down So seek the Antipodes.

ON A BOOZER EATING NOTHING, BUT STILL DRINKING

You draw as much as serves us all,
then for another stoup you call
All victuals but the wine you ban
and still refuse to share our luncheon
Nerfa, I will not call you man,
You're nothing but a gaping puncheon

CORIPPUS

ADDRESS TO THE CHIEF CITIZENS OF CARTHAGE
(Introducing his epic, Iohannis)

Sirs, as my theme I've dared the Victor's Bays
Now peace is here, a holiday song I'll raise
I want to sing of John whom war made great,
and deeds that to the end of time should last

Words from oblivion save the dimming past,
the ancient leaders and their battle fate
Take great Aeneas fierce Achilles he knew,
stout Hector, Diomedes with his horses,
sharp Palamedes, and Ulysses too—
yet who would know Aeneas but for songs?
Achilles' fame to Smyrna's bard belongs,
Aeneas lives in Vergil s learned verses

John taught me how to chant the fighting hour
and hand deserving deeds to future days
John's worthier than Achilles, it is true,
but I've no song to match Vergilian power

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7 *Eastern Influences* The question of Eastern influences has continually arisen in our study The impulses enriching and complicating rhetoric, as well as confusing it with turgidities

we have seen as Asiatic Christianity came from the East, and fresh developments in the East kept on flowing westwards to colour the Christian attitudes at every moment of our period. The first Christian School was at Alexandria, the great Fathers of the fourth century were Cappadocians. Easterners seem to have often formed the spearhead of the Christian expansion: thus in 177 the Christians persecuted at Lyons were mainly Anatolians.[11] Monasticism flowed from the East, as we have already seen. S. John Cassian, who was a monk at Bethlehem, then in Egypt and Byzantium, came west to found the monastery of S. Victor at Marseilles about 413. A Syrian monk Abraham settled near Clermont, and from his hermit cell grew the monastery of S. Cirgues.[12]

Syrians were still the great carriers. Singing Greek, the merchants of Orleans advanced to meet the Frankish King.[13] S. Caesar, Bishop of Arles, who died in 542, used to write hymns in both Latin and Greek for his mixed congregations.[14] The population of Narbonne in 587 consisted of Goths, Romans, Jews, Greeks and Syrians.[15] Sulpicius Severus writes: "we see in our armies, our cities and provinces admixtures of barbarous nations, chiefly Jews, who dwell among us, but do not adopt our ways. And the prophets tell us this is the End." In 582 in Gaul the King tried to have the Jews converted by force: some gave in, others fled to Marseilles.[16]

In fact, we must always remember the very considerable movements of people of all races in the Empire. S. Martin of Tours was a Pannonian, and even in the difficult years of the early eighth century, S. Boniface testified that there were few cities of France or Lombardy not well stocked with roving English prostitutes.[16a] Africans probably brought to Gaul the camels that were used there for traffic. Gregory of Tours tells us of a hermit near Nice who would eat only roots from Alexandria.[17] Adamnan says the Irish monks used to go to Syria to study monastic architecture, and we find a Stylites at Yvoy.[18]

It was natural then that into Christian culture went the tales of wonder and fantasy which had kept on thriving in the East—tales of talking animals, letters from Heaven, the seven sleepers, and so on.[19] In the second century an author surnamed Physiologus carried zoology into a fantasy level with his accounts of fabulous

creatures, which prefigured the medieval Bestiaries. Indeed, his work had much influence on medieval animal decorations. A popular genre which invaded the West was the *Saint's Life, which was closely related to the fantasy tale. Such Lives began* with describing martyrdoms, the reasons for a festival day; a small number survive from the first three centuries. But with the fourth century the character changes. The *Lives* take over the forms developed by the pagans—in the *Lives of the Sophists*, by Eunapius, the *Life of Pythagoras*, by Iamblichus, the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, by Philostratos.[20] The last work, written in the third century, was in part hagiography, full of marvels and magics; in all these pagan works the sages tend to be thaumaturges and faith healers. They control the elements, drive out demons, do supernatural cures and tame wild beasts. Even before Simeon Stylites, devotees used to remain on top of a column in the temple of the Syrian goddess of Hieropolis.[21]

The result was a vast series of *Saints' Lives* in which marvel jostled marvel, and which, though extravagant and unrelated to historical fact, provided an excellent channel for the movement of folk elements and travellers' tales into the upper levels of literature. Not till medieval days did this influx reveal anything like its full fruitfulness, though a work like Appuleius's *Metamorphoses* shows a magnificent early integration of such forces in a poetically realised symbolism.[22]

It was mentioned above that the only important scientific work done during the Empire occurred in the East. Both Galen and Ptolemy had synthesising minds. Ptolemy wrote on optics: in his *Catoptrics* he studied mirrors and sought to establish the law of angles of incidence and reflection; he ascertained the existence of astronomical refraction. His work on astronomy was called *Hemegiste* (Greatest) in the Alexandrian Schools, whence its name in Arabic of *Almagest*.[23] In thirteen books, it dealt with plane and spherical trigonometry, a table of chords, phenomena arising from the earth's spherical shape (with admission that the hypothesis of an axial revolution of the earth would simplify things), movements of sun and moon and eclipses (explained by means of epicycles and eccentrics). It embodied the catalogue of the earlier astronomer Hipparchus, and provided astronomical tables.[24] Returning into medieval Europe through the Arabs,

this book did much to revive Greek attitudes and found the basis from which our science could develop

Claudius Galen of Pergameum who died at Rome in 200, had an even more encyclopaedic approach He wrote over 150 medical works "He raised the level of medicine at an epoch when the schools in repute proclaimed, in the name of empiricism, the futility of theoretical preparatory studies for this science and when it was necessary to go from Rome to Alexandria to learn anatomy from a human skeleton "[25] A first rate practician, he developed a theory of vital forces put by Nature into the body to control it Such a theory was teleological it thought of the body as organised on a basis of purpose And so in one way it was a regression from the more strictly scientific views of the earlier Greek physicians But it was the first effort to get an adequate theory to explain the body as a whole It leads straight into medieval concepts of inherent forces—but it also leads into fuller concepts of organism and involves much delicate descriptions of adaptation and so in the end it leads towards the theory of evolution That indeed is looking far ahead but what is undeniable is the comprehensive breadth of Galen's incisive mind the new stamp he set on medical science and the fact that he faces straight into the medieval world

I have already mentioned that our period saw the birth of alchemy Alchemy must be understood as far more than the breakdown of classical science Alchemy is rather the birth of new creative concepts in the very heart of the breakdown It reveals the embryonic basis for concepts of transformation out of which everything most deeply creative in our European science has come it was on the lack of such concepts that classical science foundered

In Graeco-Roman times from about A D 100 there were regular industries whose business was producing cheap copies of good materials colouring substances for dresses metal for ornaments and so on. At the same time Platonic beliefs gave men the theory that all things were copies of Ideas so that what was like another thing in some marked way (such as colour) had a true relation to it Plato s theory (in the Timaeus) that all substance is of one sort was united with the later belief that all things were working to become more like their ideas This—with other beliefs about the secret properties of metals from Astrology—gave a science whose purpose was the discovery of processes for helping the poorer metals to get better

that is to say, more like gold and silver, of which the first the representative of the sun, was the highest of all

In Alexandria this business seems to have been little more than one of *making cheap metals which were white enough to be like silver or yellow* like gold. Later there was a general belief that changing the "base" (or poor) metal into gold was quite possible given the right knowledge of the stars and the secret properties of chemicals [26]

There was more in it than that: for instance, the long tradition of transformation myths connected with metallurgical processes, *the spells that were the secret property of smiths* But the statement given above is enough to show the way in which alchemy inserted into neoplatonism an active principle, a belief in a dynamic movement of processes, which was the first necessary step to overcoming the analytic limitations of Greek science This belief was closely connected with popular religion, the mystery creeds The break up of classical science was also the break through of new potentialities, new basic concepts necessary for any real advance.

The architects of the later Empire were Easterners Isidore of *Miletus and Anthemius of Tralles built S Sophia at Byzantium.* And at Rome Apollodorus of Damascus built Trajan's Forum [27] The Empire saw a steady encroachment of ornate Eastern forms, which created both Byzantine and Romanesque architecture Syria sent embroideries as well as wines to Gaul Persia sent her carpets, the Copts sent ivories and textiles Indeed, from Persia, Syria, Egypt, art influences pervaded the West, especially from *the third century on The marks are stylisation of the figure,* zoomorphy, increased exuberance of design and colour Merovingian art is a version of Syrian art coming from Asia Minor [28] Eastern motives lie "at the root of that whole which we call medieval art."[29] The sacramentarium of Gallone, a Visigothic work, is richly decorated with peacocks and parrots griffins and lions and snakes, which give away its Oriental origin, it has also Armenian influences [30] By the sixth century Visigothic art had lost its Germanic elements [31] Many German tribes, especially *the Goths, had been much affected by Oriental art, Persian and* Sarmatian, coming over the Black Sea, even before they invaded the West and found the *same sort of art flowing up* from the Mediterranean. Their barbaric art, as the Romans called it, had

entered the Empire before their spears: we meet it practised at Lyons by an artisan from Commagene.[32] In the fourth century cloisonné glass was used in the imperial armies.[33] Indeed, "from the earliest times, both in Europe and in Asia, there was an interplay of influences between north and south. Northern Asia developed a very specific art of its own, not, however, independent of southern influence. The northern art system of Asia—what we call Scythic—spread west and south to Asia Minor and to southern European Russia. From these regions, as well as via Perm (described as a Finno-Scythic culture), it directly influenced German art."[34] So what happened in Gaul after the invasions was in many ways the clash of two versions of Eastern art: the southern, being the more advanced, tended to triumph;[35] the Byzantine forms began to dominate. Chilperic's tomb was made by Byzantine artists in Gaul. Oriental motives spread even in Anglo-Saxon art.[36]

The sixth and seventh centuries were a busy time of church-building in Gaul, and the new styles controlled the development. Painters were much employed in the big private houses, though churches too were brightly painted.[37] In mosaic, legendary and Christian figures are replaced by foliage and bestiary motives, such as are found in African and Syrian mosaics of the fifth century. Sidonius describes mosaics in the Church of Patiens which are decorative patterns with blue and green predominant.[38] Already in the time of Prudentius pictures were much used in churches, since he wrote a series of quatrains on such pictures; and Gregory the Great rebuked a Bishop of Marseilles for destroying pictures which could serve to instruct the folk in religion.[39] Sidonius describes banquet-couches draped with hangings of purple silk or with figured silk textiles bearing representations of mounted horsemen in Sassanian style—which proves the importation of such stuffs as early as the mid-fifth century.[40]

This kind of detail might be heaped up. Enough has been said to show how the inrush of Oriental influences speeds up as the economic decline of the West sets strongly in. To trace such movements is easier in some ways in art than in literature. But it seems that we can safely attribute much of the rich and decorative movements in African prose and verse to contacts with the Near East. Brilliant motives in textiles and objects of

luxury may well have played their part in stimulating that sense of a glowing world which breaks out in the *Vigil of Venus* and in Appuleius's prose, in the *Moselle* of Ausonius and the romantic portions of Claudian. The mixture of allegory, realistic detail, and decorative colour, which arrives after Fronto is surely related some way or other to the Oriental influx.

We must then add this ceaseless pressure of Oriental influences to our list of forces breaking up the classical stereotype. But at the same time we must not let its obvious strength carry us away from all consideration of local traditions and trends. To take only one point, the very important part played by the marching trochaics shows that popular elements could emerge to determine certain essential modifications of classical form. Or take another example from pictorial art: the Irish art forms diffused in the seventh century were a complex mixture of native forms going back to the Bronze Age and Orientalising elements probably derived from Gaul.[41] The abstracting trends inside the classical forms first appear in the provincial art of the early Empire, in Africa as in the Near East; by the third and fourth centuries they invade the most important official monuments of the Empire, "no longer regarded as provincial and inferior or connected only with the lower strata of the population." And to bring about this important change we must look both to a decline in technical skill (bound up with the general economic decline) and to a re-orientation of spiritual choice. Out of the two elements is created, not simply a technically "inferior" art, but also an art in which new potentialities are explored, new depths of form and content. And this development is bound up with the *whole movement* of the Empire—not merely with economic decline on the one side or Oriental and Christian influences on the other. "Classical art became 'medieval' before it became Christian," says Kitzinger. "The new creed is not a primary cause of the change. The art which the Christians took over from their pagan contemporaries was already on its way towards the Middle Ages."[42]

7

POETS OF ITALY (SIXTH CENTURY)

1. *Monastics.* The sixth century saw in Italy a series of wars in which the Ostrogothic Kingdom broke up. The end came of a promising period in which it seemed the great King Theodoric was laying the basis for a revival. He had encouraged the Schools, but there had as yet been no fruitful mixture of Italian and Gothic cultures. The Goths and Visigoths and Goths were Arians, with their own priests and bishops, and they settled down with their own laws and customs.

The earlier part of the century saw, however, one event of the utmost cultural importance, the foundation of a monastic rule by Benedict of Nursa. Thus, the Western form of monasticism was created, into which flowed both the original world-denying emotion of Eastern monasticism and the organising capacity of the secular Roman tradition. The ultimate origins of Eastern monasticism were very complex, and went far back both inside and outside the *oikoumene*; but we can generalise the emotion which drove men into hermitage or group-isolation as a revolutionary emotion turning in on itself. Since there seemed no way of changing a corrupted world, the only course was to deny it utterly. The underlying desire for a purified group life, which struggled in even the most lonely anchorite, found a natural expression in the growth of brotherhoods, which, while refusing any compromise with a corrupted society, tried to reconstitute social life in a new way. The denial of sex life was a necessary part of this attitude; for sex, it was felt, was the supreme force that bound a man to the corrupted stream and made him compromise with evil. We must read that meaning into the deep hatred of sex which surges through almost all early Christian statements. The hatred is the obverse side of a deep suffering love. In the turn given to Western monasticism at its outset by Benedict, *the contradiction was intensified. For, by seeking to*

find a definite and laid-down organisational form for monastic life, he strengthened the impulse to develop a new sort of social activity But monasticism by its very nature could not develop that social activity beyond a certain point without impinging on the social and economic network all round it, and thus the more it grew the more it tended to deny its own denials and to cut away the reasons for its asceticisms The whole story of the institution is a story of that ceaseless conflict shifting into new forms and tensions as the environing historical pressures changed

It was in terms of that ceaseless conflict that we must evaluate the cultural function of the monasteries in the breakdown of the Empire and the creation of medieval Europe We can neither praise them simply as channels which carried learning on through the dark centuries, nor abuse them as anti-cultural centres from which darkness was diffused. They played in history both a constructive and a destructive role, conserving culture and delimiting it. The rapid development of monasticism in the West in the fifth century inevitably begot something of a crisis in cultural attitudes, it reintroduced, on a changed situation, the intense and intolerant purpose of many sections of the earlier Christians "The rupture was bound to occur," says Pirenne, "not only because that [classical] rhetoric was manifestly sterile, but also because asceticism, in recalling the Church to its mission, led it to the people" Eugippus, in his *Life of S Severinus*, refused to write in a style that ordinary folk could not understand, S Caesarius took great pains to write in a style which could reach the unlettered When Sulpicus Severus left a well to-do literary life for a monastic discipline, Paulinus of Nola remarked that he was going "from his Tullan (Ciceronian) letters" to "the preaching of fishermen" and the "silence of piety"[1] S Benedict does not show any special hostility to letters in his Rule, but, on the other hand, "according to the Second Book of the *Dialogues*, S Benedict seems to us to have more than one trait in common with the rough monks of the fourth century, preoccupied above all with extirpating paganism from the human soul We can assume that, breaking like them with the world, separating himself from the necessities which it imposes, he did not carry off to Monte Cassino the authors whom he has repudiated in his youth . . . S Benedict broke indeed all the

bonds which attached him to the pagan world; of the Roman he conserved only the gift of organisation, and the care to regulate, with meticulous precautions, the society which he was constructing."[2]

Cassiodorus, Senator, who established a monastery at Vivarium, gave the first example of uniting an education in letters with the monastic rule. The library collected, besides theological and devotional works, the literary and scientific classics.

2. *Ennodius.* Meanwhile, the secular Schools survived in Italy. Magnus Felix Ennodius (474–521) was a Gaul, born at Arles, but he seems to have been mostly educated in Italy, and his career was Italian. The Visigoths took his patrimony; an aunt at Milan reared him. But she died when he was sixteen, and left him destitute. He climbed out of poverty by a rich marriage; but his wife's fortunes fell away, and they both turned to religion. In 493 he was a deacon in Milan, where he carried on with his literary and rhetorical work, earning at the end the Bishop's seat at Ticinum. His episcopal work gained him a saintly reputation. He went on two embassies to Byzantium on ecclesiastical matters—the second time with a Confession of Faith to which the Eastern Churches were asked to subscribe. He arrived back after being forced to sail in a leaky vessel expected to founder.[3]

His remains include nearly 500 letters as well as theological and panegyrical prose, declamations, and a number of poems, some of which are obscene. In his *Eucharisticum*, where he tells how he was led out of a life of sin, he records his early love of verse. "Elevated by mad successes and ignorant of the reverend profession, I yielded myself to the flock of poets. I was delighted by songs fabricated out of fourfold clauses and ordered with a firm variety of feet. Poems mingled me in a carried-away and yielding state among the choir of angels, and if I was the fashioner by observed law of memorable verses, I beheld under my feet whatever is covered by the axis of the sky." That is hardly the language of someone who has learned to scorn the siren muse.

He sets forth in *Paraenesis didascalica* (dated about 511) his frank belief in the basic nature of rhetoric, in an address to two youths. He debates first whether to write in prose or verse and decides

on a mixture, so that strong statement and ease of style may go hand in hand He praises Poetry, and introduces Modesty, Chastity and Faith, who are the spiritual basis of letters Grammar comes tripping in in trochaic tetrameters, Rhetoric in the more rhetorical elegiacs declares her supremacy, her power to change black to white and white to black Poetry, Law, Dialectic, Arithmetic derive their virtues from her, she declares

He wrote Hymns, which fail to kindle, and Itineraries, which fail to travel, and a polymetric *Epithalamium*, which is scrappy and is a peculiar work for a man who was to be made a saint The passage where Cupid laments the work of Christianity will be found among my translations His declamations include themes such as Menelaus Contemplating the Ruins of Troy, his controversia, such themes as "Against a man who sets a statue of Minerva in a bad place"

3 *Boethius* Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius was born about 480 He was reared by Q Aurelius Symmachus, whose daughter he married, and rose early in the world By 510 he was Consul His learning and his charities were famous He held high rank at the Ostrogothic court, and we find him asked for a mathematical regulation of the coinage to prevent forgery, a sundial and a water clock For fourteen years after his consulship he maintained his leading position But he protected the provincials from public and private rapine, defended the Campanians against a high official saved Paulinus (a man who had been Consul) from the "dogs of the palace," and thwarted a prominent informer He resisted oppressive officers wherever he encountered them "How often have I withstood Conigastus to his face, whenever he has attacked a weak man's fortune How often have I turned by force Trigulla, the overseer of the Emperor's household, from an unjust act that he had begun or even carried out How many times have I put my own authority in danger by protecting those wretched people who were harried with unending false charges by the greed of barbarian Goths which ever went unpunished" As a result he was tried on a fake charge of treason and sentenced to death and confiscation Imprisoned for a while in the baptistry of the church at Ticinum he was put to death by execution or torture [4]

on a mixture, so that strong statement and ease of style may go hand in hand He praises Poetry, and introduces Modesty, Chastity and Faith, who are the spiritual basis of letters Grammar comes tripping in in trochaic tetrameters, Rhetoric in the more rhetorical elegiacs declares her supremacy, her power to change black to white and white to black Poetry, Law, Dialectic, Arithmetic derive their virtues from her, she declares

He wrote Hymns, which fail to kindle, and Itineraries, which fail to travel, and a polymetric *Epithalamium*, which is scrappy and is a peculiar work for a man who was to be made a saint The passage where Cupid laments the work of Christianity will be found among my translations His declamations include themes such as Menelaus Contemplating the Ruins of Troy, his controversia, such themes as "Against a man who sets a statue of Minerva in a bad place."

3 *Boethius* Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius was born about 480 He was reared by Q Aurelius Symmachus, whose daughter he married, and rose early in the world By 510 he was Consul His learning and his charities were famous He held high rank at the Ostrogothic court, and we find him asked for a mathematical regulation of the coinage to prevent forgery, a sundial and a water clock. For fourteen years after his consulship he maintained his leading position But he protected the provincials from public and private rapine, defended the Campanians against a high official, saved Paulinus (a man who had been Consul) from the "dogs of the palace," and thwarted a prominent informer He resisted oppressive officers wherever he encountered them "How often have I withstood Conigastus to his face, whenever he has attacked a weak man's fortune How often have I turned by force Trigulla the overseer of the Emperor's household, from an unjust act that he had begun or even carried out How many times have I put my own authority in danger by protecting those wretched people who were harried with unending false charges by the greed of barbarian Goths which ever went unpunished " As a result he was tried on a fake charge of treason and sentenced to death and confiscation Imprisoned for a while in the baptistry of the church at Ticinum, he was put to death by execution or torture [4]

In prison he wrote *The Consolations of Philosophy*, the final work by a man full in the stream of Roman tradition. The *Consolations* to which he had looked were those of the secular stream of thought, not of Christianity; but the coming centuries turned a blind eye to this fact, and the *Consolations* became an almost holy work.[5] "After Augustine he appears as the great teacher and weighty authority of the early Middle Ages."[6] His philosophy was a composite one, in which Aristotelian and Neoplatonic elements mingled. Its virtue lies in a steady vision of life as holding a dignity and purpose amid the worst miseries and trials; in a faith, metaphysically phrased, in the powers of the human mind to penetrate the dilemmas which evade an analytic logic. Boethius had before his imprisonment translated Aristotle's *Organon*, and he aspired to translate the whole of Aristotle, with commentary, as well as Plato, and then to show how the two thinkers could be harmonised—brought together in a single adequate conception of reality. He had further delved into the subjects of arithmetic and music.[7] "At the moment when Christianity wanted to transform the Roman world, Boethius (as Theodoric wrote to him) made out of Greek thought Roman thought."

To say that he was driven by a scientific zeal would be to misuse terms; but when we place him in his period and realise what that intuition of the fusion of Aristotle and Plato meant, we see that Boethius had a profound sense of what was lacking in the thought of his period. Carry his intuition far enough ahead into the action of history, and we do find that it leads us into Renascence science. It was the precondition of the rediscovery of science by men; it pointed the way to the integration which the Middle Ages fought out and achieved and yielded up. That is why the *Consolations* meant so much to the coming centuries. And dry, hard, limited as the book is in many ways, it holds the clear core of something thought out, followed up to the depths, which had been lacking in secular thought for many a long year. It is opposed to the Christian world-view, since it holds implicit a belief that men can penetrate and master the secrets of matter and spirit by the integrity of their dedicated lives.[8] But it is the voice of a lonely man, who is able to face the final truth of his thoughts because all earthly hope has fallen away and in the

narrow stone place of his betrayal he can confront the dilemmas of human life without fear, without premature pressure Christianity, in its deepest aspirations, was rejecting the world and the quest to master the world, because in a falling, compromised world it could touch nothing but corruption, it proposed a brotherhood of rejection where Boethius was proposing a fearless integrity of truth Together, those two attitudes have given all that is best in European society •

4 *Maximian* Very different was the other significant poet of the century in Italy Maximianus seems to have been of high old Etruscan descent. The works of his which we possess, Elegies, were written in his later years, and their main theme is that of the wretchedness of age Love adventures play a large part in the picture, but to intensify its dark shades In the third elegy Maximian tells how when he was young he fell in love with a girl named *Aquilina She returned his love, but the inex*perienced pair gave themselves away to the girl's mother Boethius noticed the telltale pallor of his young friend, and made him unbare the whole story The fifth elegy recounts an embassy to Byzantium, dated about 550, during which Maximian comes to grief with a Greek courtesan Some astonishing lines of this elegy are worth quoting

' While woman, you mourn my failing member here,
you show yourself with a worse sickness afflicted.

She raged ' O, you don't know, it's clear don't know
No private grief, but the world's chaos I mourn.
Birds cattle beasts and men all things below,
whatever breathes on earth, by this is born.
None but achieves its happy sexual hour,
none but ere death is satisfied and mated.
This pierces the pair with such a binding power
out of two striving bodies one's created.

Non fleo privatum, sed generale chaos A tremendous line Bitterly sardonic as it is it yet reminds us of Raskolnikov's homage to the prostitute, "I do not kneel to you, but to all the sorrow in the world" It shows the aloof, bitter mind of Maximian, looking on at his own little private drama of impotence and despair and

calmly setting it against the dusk of the world The sordidness of the setting of his judgment is deliberate What else could sufficiently achieve the effect of a belittled and frustrated personality? Maximian at once mocks his self-pity and justifies it, accepts the acrid desolation of his spirit and cries out against it, equates his own little tragedy of pride with the crash of a civilisation and refuses to equate it, so that the balance trembles between personality and world, and we are not sure which is the greater tragedy after all

In Maximian there is no trace of Christian belief. It is the line of pagan elegy which dies in his work And yet though he seems play-acting that decease and laughing at the fate come upon the heir of Propertius, his bitterness has echoes that ring back out of the future, not the past Maximian is related more to Villon and to Swift than to Propertius The "discord at the heart of things," at which Boethius looks with unflinching eyes in the quest for a new logic of mastery and endurance, Maximian accepts as the inescapable curse twisting all human hopes That is why both men are at root so modern, and have turned away from all the forms of integration which satisfied the ancient world Nothing can solve the dilemma which Boethius faces except complete scientific mastery of the world and a perfected logic of process Nothing can solve the dilemma which Maximian jeers at except a Freudian revelation of the complex ambivalences of the human psyche and the creation of an art based on human wholeness Both tasks are yet to be completed

In making these remarks about Maximian I am not claiming him as a great poet His field is slight, he has only one theme, on which he rings continual small changes of scorn and ironic acidity But in his time and place he was a creative writer who subtly reveals in his handling of a traditional form the sudden terrifying gap in tradition

5 *End in Italy* That flare-up of vision and insight in Boethius and Maximian was the end of the old culture in Italy The Schools went on through the century, and Raby cites one moment, in April, 544, when verse-declamation made a sensation in the presbytery before the *confessio* in S Peter's Pope Vigilius with his Bishops received in state a subdeacon, who presented him

with an epic on the Acts of the Apostles This subdeacon, Arator, had been in youth a friend of Ennodius, who wrote of his charm and brilliance, and he belonged in fact to the line of Ennodius, not that of Boethius The Pope heard a part of the poem, and then ordered the manuscript to be put in the archives But the gathering asked for a public recitation

It was given in the Church of S Peter ad Vincula The poet read and reread his poem for four days, to continual applause "The Romans had not lost their love of rhetoric, and they still applauded the old points, however feebly they were made Yet we can well believe that the recitation of Arator was one of the last that ever echoed in forum or church in Rome The fall of the Gothic Kingdom was not compensated by the imperial restoration, and, before long, the dreaded Lombards were again reducing Italy to ruin A new order had begun which is represented by the pontificate of Gregory I (590–604)"[10]

Gregory had been born rich, and in 573 he became Prefect of the city But when his father died, he gave all his goods to the Church and became a monk in his ancestral palace on the Coelian Hill. In 590 he became Bishop of Rome He himself stated that he had no interest in avoiding barbarisms and solecisms[11] His prose style is one of sombre directness and force, the offshoot of a mind concentrated on deep issues of spiritual and material reorganisation Its directness is closely related to the new attitudes developed by the monks "Let no one hold it against me if after this *Homily* I stop since as you all perceive, our tribulations have increased on all sides we are encircled with swords, on all sides we fear the nearing danger of death Some return to us with mutilated hands, others we hear are captive or are killed Now I am forced to withdraw my tongue from exposition, since it wearies the soul of my life Now let no one ask of me zeal for sacred eloquence because my harp is tuned to lamenting and my organ to the voice of those who weep Now the eye of my heart does not wake in the discussion of the mysteries since my soul has fallen asleep out of weariness"

ENNODIUS

CUPID'S COMPLAINT AGAINST CHRISTIANITY

We lose, Mother, our might's old meed and glory,
no one calls *Venus*, mocked is the Loves' story,
and children fail the rising age. The frost
of chastity eats up many to their cost,
and lofty vows with a new fervour tame
the flesh. The world scarce stands on its lean name.

RHETORIC SPEAKS

Charges can't harm the man whom I hold dear.
The dirt of life with wealth of art I hide.
The senate's vote and snowy worth won't clear
the smutted man whom I make all deride.
Guilty and holy from my mouth I dower.
Judgment is led a captive at my word.
Tarentine wool, good fame, or jewels, power—
what strength have they, when once my scorn is heard?

Keep to my study, and the world you'll own.
Fearing no doubt, art offers me a throne.

BOETHIUS

A WORD

Brave heart, go climbing in the wake
  of ancient honour Bowed you stand
and wait? Who conquers earth can take
  the stars within his hand

ORPHEUS

Happy the man whose eyes could find
the lucid spring where good has birth
Happy the man with power to unbind
the chains of unrelenting earth.

Tears the Thracian poet shed
He sang because his wife was dead
The woods came following his song,
and rivers ceased to flow along
He made the stag in courage stride
at the ravening lion's side
The hare came bravely at the sound
and watched the calmly sniffing hound
Yet the anguish knew no rest,
it burned within the singer's breast
The song could soothe all living things
but not the singer's sufferings

On cruel heavens he cried for shame
Down to the doors of hell he came
There he stood and struck each measure
sweetly framed for waking pleasure,
every music touch and stroke
that his mother muse awoke
every charm that pain could borrow,
every charm that love yields sorrow
He wept his sadness stirred the gloom
He sang and pleaded against doom
He begged and coaxed the King of Hell
Cerberus fell beneath the spell
he wagged his tail at such a song
Then the avenging Fury throng
that goad the damned through endless years,
paused and stayed and burst in tears
Ixion's wheel of turning pain
grindingly slowed and slowed again
Tantalus at the fountain's brink,
forgot awhile his wish to drink
The vulture raised his beak and waited,
with gushing melodies satiated
There sat the master of the dead
"You have conquered" at last he said
"I give the woman where she belongs
You have won here with your songs

But remember what I tell
until you are out of hell,
you must not see her. Look away.
But who shall make a lover obey?
Love as only law he'll claim
To the skirts of night they came
then Orpheus turned, in joy's surprise,
and killed Eurydice with his eyes

This is your life Here you may read
a warning, if you seek to lead
your soul towards the gods of day.
He that, succumbing on the way,
turns back towards the darkening cave,
loses what he has toiled to save,
staring upon the ghosts of hell

THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

What discord at the heart of things
destroys the pact? What god has set
this war between two truths, until
singly they stand our test and yet
together form a strife of will?

Is truth a single harmony?
Each life to its own purpose clings
and yet the flesh entangled soul,
using a smothered fire, can't see
the subtle links that bind the whole.

But why such anxious zeal to tear
the mocking veils and look behind?
Of what we seek, are we aware?
Then why such toil if all is known?
Yet otherwise the search is blind

What we've not known we cannot need,
and unseen banner cannot lead
How could we find, or, having found,
how should we know we'd reached the goal?

In contact with the great Alone,
is it the whole or parts we mind?
Though by our cloudy senses bound,
the self has memories that endure
it drops the parts, yet grasps the whole

Then he who seeks the truth must fall
on paradox He'll neither grip
nor yet forget, within the All,
but still he seeks the Truth he saw,
to handle it and learn its law
by adding truths that he let slip
to those he kept secure.

LOVE INTERCHANGING

If with pure solicitous thought
the Thunderer's lofty law you've sought,
look to the height of the topless sky,
look where with equal pact go by
the stars keeping their ancient peace.

Never does the Sun distress
cool Moon with fires wildly-spilled,
nor on the summit of the world
does the quickly-gyring Bear
down to the western waters fare
though other stars go down and sink,
of ocean he will never drink.
The star of dusk foretells the shades,
the dawnstar brings warm day and fades

So Love with interchanging forces
guides round the everlasting courses,
and Strife is exiled from the stars

MAXIMIAN

LYCORIS

Lovely Lycoris was beloved by me
Our hearts and all our good in common lay.
Unjarred we kissed for years, contentedly.
Now, shaken, she has spewed my love away
Young men, young lovers, she desires at last
I'm flabby now, she says, and impotent
She puts aside the sweetness of the past
and won't return to one whose blood is spent.
She finds excuses for her foul deceit
and swears I'm doddering with viciousness
When lately out of doors we chanced to meet,
she spat and hid her face behind her dress
"Is this the man to whom I gave my heart?
and did I kiss him, kissed myself, abed?"
As if the old love shuddered to depart,
she retched and heaped her insults on my head

The long day ends and what comes next? We burn
with shame at losing what was once delight
Had I not better die at once than earn
the mockery that rightly meets my plight?
When out of life the last weak beauty drains,
why live, despised, to grieve for ruined powers?
Now nothing of that life we lived remains
Time, wrecking all has wrecked those precious hours
The drifts of grey are closing round my brow
and purple on my coarsening lips I find
The girl was lovely, and she's lovely now
She laughs at time within her mocking mind
Ah yes, her body keeps its structure still
amid my ashes lurks a covered fire
Beautiful girls beat time with stronger will,
the graces do not wither out entire

Young men are cropping love's well pastured field
I love you for the past, when flaws I see
Your youngster body rises, and I yield,
my blood is lush with craving memory
But since all power-of act has taken leave,
I may not even fret at blood s delay
The wretched have at least the chance to grieve
Once I had much, I weep my loss to-day

The bride shrinks back at times, at times her boy
The woman falling makes her conqueror fall
Why not like beasts, feel only present joy
and let the past be past beyond recall?
Yet even herds leave unfamiliar ground
back to old pasture roving flocks will go
Beneath his chosen shade the bull is found
and sheep will search for meadows that they know
The nightingale frequents one singing place
and savage herds prefer their usual den
You only leave a tried and known embrace
for hospitality from strange-eyed men
O why not lean where you can trust the aid?
All that's unknown is thick with doubt and pain
I m a grandfather, and your locks have greyed.
Let equal years bring friendship in their train.

Call *me your friend or brother if you must,*
your father—any name of tenderness
Kindness succeeding love, and honour lust,
reason will conquer all blind instinct's stress

We'll weep awhile the distant years that marred
But to remember pain for long is hard.

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Once I was strong though now my vigour drops
O let the ghost of pleasure amply please
Old farmers find respect for ancient crops,
the veteran's praise is battle memories
The rustic weeps his antiquated steer,
the rider pensions nags he rode of late
I'm not so crushed and plundered of my gear
a poet, I can stretch in song my fate

Find gravity, accept the weight of time,
and on our past some small affection spend
Who damns himself when guiltless of the crime?
Who still goes journeying at the journey's end?

for a stable scholar like Isidore to cover the whole field of culture and sort its objects out, to extract what is useful and discard what is doubtful or bad. So Isidore sets out in his *Etymologiae* or *Origines* to do all the research necessary, and above all to clarify the meanings of words. For nearly all Latin words have been used by both pagans and Christians, and the pagan usage cannot be quite the same as the Christian. Only if the distinctions are made quite clear can there be safety for the souls of the young. Hence his *Etymologiae* and *Differentiae* and *Synonyma*. And hence the way in which in the second prologue of his *Synonyma* he announces, not a grammatical treatise, but a lamentation. "He exhorts the reader to reflect, not on the advantages of a rich and abundant language, but on the true causes of human misery."[3] There is nothing peculiar in that when we grasp the driving force of Isidore's vast work of compilation and boiling-down.

The intention is to get rid of the living body of ancient culture by this synthetic product. To that extent the result is bad and sterilising. But in an exhausted world this exhausting effort has its value. It saved in thinned-out form a great deal of material, and handed it on to the coming centuries when the weak intellectual digestion was not capable of richer foods.

2. *Ireland.* It is when we go further north that we escape from this impoverishing method, and find a hunger which in its way is entire, which wants to swallow the world. The weaknesses here are the desperate difficulty of bridging the gulf between the culture of the disintegrating Celtic clan and the culture of Western Christianity, with its complex mixture of decadence and new potentialities.

Ireland had had Christian contacts before Patrick landed on its shores. There were mercantile relations with Spain as well as with Bordeaux. (In the mid-sixth century, amid all the turmoils, it seems there was still a regular service of boats from Cork to the Loire, which went back to Bangor with a cargo of students for Ireland. They came in groups of fifty at a time, regularly taking three days on the trip.[4])

Here there was no Latin of the people, and so Latin culture came in almost entirely through the Church. The schools of the sixth century were numerous, monastic, not organised on any

8

SPAIN, IRELAND, GAUL (SIXTH CENTURY)

1 *Spain* Spain had been overrun by the Arian Visigoths, with Byzantine garrisons holding parts of the south King Reccerede was converted to Catholicism in 589 but no doubt it was some time before the Germans in general came over The Church however, was increasingly powerful But not till the later part of the sixth century did anyone emerge with a strong enough intellectual grip to exercise a dominant influence and to pull together the strands of the broken literary tradition [1].

This man was Isidore, born in Cartagena about 570, who became Bishop of Seville, dying in 636 He had a passion for books, for the acquisition of knowledge, which comes clearly out in his poem on his library He owned Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Persius and Lucan as well as the Christian poets books of law and medicine, and (it seems) a cupboard for herbs and spices But he would not be the man of his century if he did not condemn pagan literature What distinguishes him is his interest in science in knowledge for its own sake, for practical uses He wants activity and clarity "Ignorance is the mother of errors, ignorance nourishes vice" Study, therefore, is supremely important, but at the same time the Christian student must treat all that is not learned on the authority of the Church as a reserved domain (*quasi secretum*) He is half against rhetoric. "The study of things is profitable, not the verbal decorations" But to study one needs the instrument of study, which cannot be separated from grammar and rhetoric. "Rather grammar than heresy," he groans [2]

What is to be done with such a tangled problem? Without culture a man will fall into sin he will not be able to make out the truth or falsity of a proposition But culture is full of dangerous temptations, and in studying to eliminate error a man is multiplying the possibilities of it The only safe course is

in Continental MSS. We can trace the influence of Irish monks more clearly in the speculative area of thought. The double and treble rhymes may have been due only to a natural development of vernacular forces along lines already showing up before the fall of the Empire.[7] On the other hand, it would be wrong to rule out the possibility of a much wider Irish influence in this matter than we can show out of the scanty evidence.[8]

In any event, we can safely postulate the convergence of a great number of influences making for rhythmical accentual verse and for rhyme-structures, one of which was the inheritance of old Celtic forms in the Irish area. Certainly the Irish were the first to exploit double and triple rhymes. But the oldest Irish Christian hymn is that to S. Patrick by S. Sechnall (Secundinius), which is based on the trochaic tetrameter and has only accidental rhymes.[9]

3. *S. Columba.* We get a surer glimpse of what the Celts were bringing into Western culture in the magnificent poem, *Altus Prosator* ("Ancient of Days"), which I translate in full. It is written in a transitional form—accentual iambics with rough elements of rhythm as well as occasional rhymes. The diction is rugged, a mixture of Church Latin as spoken, strange words out of glosses, Biblical Latin, bits of Hisperic Latin—a development we shall examine in a moment. The poem is alphabetical, that is, the first stanza begins with an A, the second with a B, and so on.

The attribution to Columba may be taken as certain. Columba was born about 521 in Donegal, of high lineage. He was trained in the monastic seminary of Clonard. At twenty-five, it seems, he was initiated into the priesthood by an anchorite Bishop of Clonfad, and sent to found churches and monasteries at many sites. In 561 he left on his mission to the Western Highlands of Scotland. Hy, or Iona, was made his headquarters, where he settled in a monastery of 150 men. He put his hand to any job, illumination or boat-baling, corn-grinding, farmwork or attendance on the sick. We need not follow here his missionary and monastic career; but we may pause to note the basic difference between Celtic and ordinary Latin monasticism. The latter was imported from the East into Italy, where it soon came under the Roman organising power of men like Benedict and Gregory.

system like those of York or Canterbury The relations between Latin and popular speech were different than in regions where a continual slight tension went on between literary and spoken Latin Here the tension was between Church Latin and Celtic habits of speech.

Irish verse was not strictly metrical, but it used assonance, alliteration and rhyme (including double and triple rhymes) It is certain that the Irish Christian poets played some part in the development of rhyme as a basic element in European verse, but to say exactly what the part was is not so easy Rhyme had been long known as a rhetorical prose device from the days of Gorgias Lucilius, the early Roman satirist, introduces a rhyme and then laughs at it as "artificial, Isocretean, turgid and childish" Catullus within the space of thirteen lines, in his poem on the marriage of Thetis, has hexameters ending in the words *odores, colores, furores,* and *timores* Ovid has a line with an internal (leonine) rhyme *Quot caelum stellas, tot habet tua Roma puellas* ('Rome has as many maidens as heaven with stars is laden"), anticipating what was a favourite medieval device Rhymes (end rhymes of *-e* or *-ae*) are frequent in acrostics of the mid third century [5] The rich and complex Asianic prose of the Frontonians is full of rhyming and assonantal effects Appuleius has open jingles like *saeva scaeva virosa ebrosa pervicax pertinax* ("a shrilly, silly, sunken, drunken, prattling battling hag") Augustine has a system in his sermons of collecting rhyme on rhyme in a rush of parallel phrases [6]

There is no question, then, of rhyme and assonance being unknown to Graeco-Roman writers They knew it well, but had for the most part no use for it except in highly elaborated prose Not till quantity gave way to accent in verse could rhyme come into settled usage

By the sixth century verse is becoming more and more accentual, and the time is ripe for rhyme Celtic influences may well have speeded up the movement, but there is not much plausibility in the suggestion that Irish monks took ideas on rhyme to S Gall and other monasteries in East France, Switzerland and Western Germany, and so brought about the burst of double and triple rhyming used so forcefully in France and Italy in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries We have no trace of old Irish hymns

subjects like sea, sky, fire, wind, which may have once fitted properly into the poem

Classical scholars have been harsh about it. "Rubbish," or "a kind of rhythmic twaddle about astronomy and the prophet in the lion's den," or "that exasperating product of human folly and bad taste," and so on But Jenkinson, who has thoroughly studied the poem, sums up "This simple form is handled with much ability and taste . . and we are left to wonder how such a vocabulary came to be associated with such artistic feeling It is not enough to suppose that behind the Latin expression may stand thoughts conceived in native Irish That seems likely enough But, apart from that, there is a directness and freedom in the expression itself which, as far as I know, cannot be matched among other remnants of contemporary literature "[11]

Hisperica Famina gives us some clue to the sort of melting-pot which was simmering through these centuries Many of these experiments and chance developments must have died away without any direct effects in the main stream of culture Others had their effect, and have been lost to the light of history Others we can dimly see flowing into the main stream, colouring it slightly, evaporating or sinking as sediment, adding their quota to the thickening and enriched materials

By the end of the sixth century new cultural pressures were coming into Britain The Celtic influences from Iona were affecting Northumbria, Roman influences were entering Kent Political consolidations in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms were going on Before long Britain would be the one area of the West where a live cultural tradition survived From it invigorating forces would move back into the Continent of Charlemagne

5 *Grammar in Gaul* Hisperic Latin was by no means the strangest phenomenon in the culture of this century, for if one looks long enough, one can find a very lively lyricism at work under the barbaric composite skin But in Gaul, amid the scholastic backblocks, odder things were happening—the ingenious virtuosity of the *Famina* without any of its inner spirit

We possess the treatise of a grammarian named Vergilius Maro, which at first glance seems the work of a lunatic or a hoaxer But in fact this Vergil was neither, he seems rather

Among the Celts it was much closer to a living tribal system and to notions of clan brotherhood It therefore took the form of a kind of reformulation of clan fraternity on ascetic lines, with a clan chief taking the place of bishop or abbot The clash between Celtic and Roman forms of a monasticism in which the latter won ,was thus a clash between tribal and feudalising forces

4 *Hisperic Latin* I mentioned the existence of Hisperic Latin in *Altus Prosator*, e g the noun *tithicus* for sea Hisperic Latin never uses the nouns *mare* or *pontus* or *oceanus*, it uses instead *tethis* (Tethys, the sea-goddess), with adjective *tethicus* or *tithicus* But what is Hisperic Latin? A version of Latin we must remember, had lingered on among the Britons whom the Anglo-Saxons drove westward Gildas, a sixth century writer of those Britons, shows in his *Lorica* and a *Charm* against travel misfortunes the same liking for rhyme and rhythmical construction as the Irish Out of an eddy of backwater influences the Britons and Irish of this period developed a mixture of Greek, Hebrew and vulgar Latin the peculiar lingo we call Hisperic, and which attracted even scholars like Aldhelm

The one masterpiece in this lingo is the *Hisperica Famina* It is written in lines of odd lengths—varying from seven to twenty-seven syllables Each line makes up a sentence with a sort of assonance between a noun and an adjective in each line Thus in the opening line (*ampla pectoralem suscitat vernia cavernam*—' ample delight rouses the breastly cavern") there is assonance between *pectoralem* and *cavernam* and the cesura occurs after *pectoralem* [10]

The writer was an Irishman or a Briton of the south west He begins by glorifying the rhetors and the poet himself as a match for any of his contemporaries He goes on to bid a glazier, who aspires to culture to go home to his family, where everything is in confusion He then illustrates the superiority of his own Latin by a string of similes and by depreciations of other writers Then comes the account of a *Day* The awakening of Nature the countryfolk, the school, midday, a walk and a meal provided by the farmers (who are addressed in vernacular—which raises a problem since scholars might talk only Latin) sunset, another meal (apparently given by the townfolk) then the turning in to sleep or work. Next comes a set of short sections dealing with

is that they are not satisfied with treating ordinary language at all; they want something rarer and more mystical. So they developed The Art of Cutting Words Up, *Ars Scissendi*, which Vergil treats at length in his epitoma xiii. Scission is got by upsetting the normal order of syllables or letters. Thus "poetry is dying" could become "ets ing try dy in po." Or simpler transpositions could be used: thus *regnum* becomes *germen*. Galbungus goes so far as to produce a sentence beginning PPPP.PPP.RRR. RRR. L M. SSS . . .

The learned cutters-up, *scindentes periti*, declared that they took certain precautions to ensure that their puzzles could be solved and the mess unscrambled. Vergil explains the idea behind the cutting-up, which he says was invented by his Aeneas. "First, that we may approve the sagacity of our scholars in inquiring out and ferreting such things as are obscure; second, because of the grace and edification of our eloquence; thirdly, lest certain mystical things, and things we ought to spread before only the knowing should be easily found available by the lowest and imbecile, lest, according to the ancient canticle, swine tread on gems."[13]

Vergil's attitude to verse is of interest. In dealing with it, he seems to be trying to apply the prosodic rules of the old classical metres to rhythmical verse without understanding that anything is wrong. The verses he cites are of South Gallic origin, though they resemble the Irish; they have developed a rhythmical basis and observe the rule for hiatus. It seems clear that rhythmical forms have now forced recognition from the schools, where they are being treated side by side with the old classical metres.[14] Since the treatise-writers are now dealing with these non-classical forms, we can safely deduce a fairly long period leading up to this acceptance, during which the new forms were seething and strengthening their basis in popular usage.[15] In the verses cited by Vergil rhyme is already becoming firmly established. Two lines which he quotes from his Aeneas show verse in a kind of nursery-rhyme form:

Phoebus surgit, caelum scandit,
polo claret, cunctis paret.
Sun doth arise and climb up the skies
shines to the pole and lights up the whole.[16]

What is most surprising is the number of poets writing like

a semi-illiterate fellow with a real passion for learning, acute and unstable The more one considers his writing, the more one feels he is the perfect expression of the disintegrative side of this century's development, as Venantius Fortunatus, with whom we are to end our story, represents all that was most alive and forward-moving [12]

Vergil seems of Toulouse, an exasperated scribbler who was taken up by the Irish, but was probably smiled and scowled at by the more respectable teachers of the town His book is a mine of anecdotes about the fellows of his own type haunting the ruins of culture in these years He mentions three Lucans (one Arabian, one Indian, one African) who taught his master, Aeneas There was also a Gregory, the Egyptian, who wrote 3,000 books, and Donatus, the first grammarian, who lived at Troy for perhaps a thousand years, and who visited Romulus at Rome The Lucans taught Aeneas, the master of Vergil This Aeneas mentioned in one of his books a Maro who lived about the time of the Flood, so that, when Vergil showed promise, his master said "This son of mine shall be called Maro, for in him the spirit of the ancient Maro lives again" There have been three Vergils—one a pupil of Donatus, Vergil of Asia, his pupil—"he set me my copies when I was a child', and our Vergil

Other characters whom we meet are Galbungus and Gelbidius and Glengus, and a Cicero who is not the Cicero of the history books Mitterius cannot sleep through weighing the difference between the pronoun *hic* and the adverb *hic*. Galbungus and Terrentius spend fourteen days arguing whether *ego* has a vocative Regulus the Cappadocian and Sedulus the Roman come near to violence over frequentative verbs, disputing for fifteen days and nights without food or sleep—each keeping three hired men to come to his aid if needed They all argue with the passion of theological disputants they remind us of S Jerome's account of a dispute he had with a monk "How often he roused me to fury! How often we spat in each other's faces!" (*Ep*, I 4)

These grammarians looked on themselves as men dealing with the essential matters of culture They live in a world of inspirations like lyric poets "Then he read, as if filled with a prophetic spirit" They believe in leading disputers "as in an oracle" One strange result of the isolated, excited world in which they argue

is that they are not satisfied with treating ordinary language at all; they want something rarer and more mystical. So they developed The Art of Cutting Words Up, *Ars Scissendi*, which Vergil treats at length in his epitoma xiii. Scission is got by upsetting the normal order of syllables or letters. Thus "poetry is dying" could become "ets ing try dy in po." Or simpler transpositions could be used: thus *regnum* becomes *germen*. Galbungus goes so far as to produce a sentence beginning PPPP.PPP.RRR. RRR. L M. SSS . . .

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that, whom he cites Lupus, Don, Gergesus, Sigillius, Vitellius, Vergil of Asia, Donatus, Plastus, Aeneas, and others Even if he faked the poems, the effect is as breath-taking. We get a glimpse of widespread fermentations and experimental developments

6 *Fortunatus* The poet on whom we end our inquiry, who brings together all that is yet vital in the main stream of Gallic and Italian cultures, was Venatius Honorius Clementianus Fortunatus, born at Treviso in North Italy He studied at Ravenna, and wrote some verses on a new church there, but while a young man, about 565, he left Italy for Gaul He may have felt restless amid the increasing difficulties of life in Italy, or may have felt on his conscience a vow to go on pilgrimage to S Martin of Tours, to whose intercession he attributed the ending of some eye-trouble [17] He made his way north to Mainz and then to Cologne and Treves, where he sang of the Moselle, and to Metz, where he celebrated Sigibert's marriage to a Spanish Princess Brunhildis

Frankish power had been consolidated in Gaul by Clovis, who died in 511—though his death was followed by divisions and conspiracies among his sons In the process, the Burgundians were broken up and the Ostrogoths forced out of Provençe, and in 558 Chlotar held the whole Frankish power North-eastwards the Franks were expanding against the Thuringians and nearing the Saxons Chlotar's death in 561, however, led to further divisions Meanwhile, the Gallo-Roman nobles had to a considerable extent survived, they kept on supplying the personnel for the State administration and the upper levels of the Church Inside the fortified towns the merchants were still a fairly substantial class, and the water ways still saw a steady traffic.

Fortunatus, in his travels, soon gained a high reputation for the fluent and well-ordered verses he poured out for the bishops and other dignitaries But even in the poems turned off as a job-of work in return for hospitality there is nothing servile about Fortunatus He "appears to have won his right to the friendship of these men on even terms He sat at their tables and recited his poems after dinner," says Raby, "or perhaps composed impromptu epigrams The Franks had taken over the externals of the civilisation into which they entered King

Chilperic was something of a scholar, though Gregory of Tours speaks with contempt of the verses of the man whom he called 'the Nero and Herod of our time.' It is clear that many of these Frankish nobles, especially those of the new official class, had been educated in the Gallic schools, and so at the Austrasian court they formed, with the bishops, a circle of men who recognised the value of learning and the merits of a brilliant young poet from Italy."[18]

From first to last in the verse of Fortunatus we feel a candid and warm-hearted character, with strong capacities for striking up friendships and for enjoying the good things of life with a sly sense of humour. He is never happier than when recounting his mishaps or drawing a mildly self-depreciatory picture of himself. The direct man-to-man touch is something new; it is near to the familiarity of Ausonius, but it has an active quality added, an immediate recoil from life in its many-sided wealth of things and people. Catullus had it, on the level of a high lyric intensity; Fortunatus has regained it on a simple level of ordinary human intercourse, without the crystal sharp edges of Catullus's character, but with a gentle normality. He knows all the rhetorical tricks, and uses them, but for the most part without strain. What emerges from his work is a feeling that a crisis has been overcome and that the rhetorical tensions have been resolved within a new development of personality. He is hungry for enjoyment, but without perversity or anxiety; what ultimately controls his attitude to the world is a simple desire for fullness and stability in personal relationships.

Typical of his easy exchanges are the verses to Gogo which I give among the translations. Gogo was Mayor of the Palace, the King's trusted counsellor, and Fortunatus achieved with him a lasting friendship. (Roger describes Gogo's prose as pretentious and obscure, and outside the classical tradition) In this sort of bantering gaiety, with its background of a genuine intellectual life, we meet the type of verse which the circle of Catullus cultivated—but, as I said, here the relationship is simpler, broader, less original as expression, but somehow embracing a larger human warmth Years later, when Fortunatus had settled down at Poitiers, he wrote to Gogo, wondering whether he was netting the Rhine salmon, or walking on the Moselle slopes under the

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vine-shadows, or strolling along the Meuse where the traffics of bird, fish and boat were equally thick, or tending his estate, or looking after the royal school

There is little in his verses to remind us of the characters in Gregory of Tours's lurid pages, where the clergy share the general violence—where the Bishop of Soissons goes mad through boozing and the Bishop of Le Mans and his wife murder people for their property "She often cut off the men's genitals together with their belly's skin, and she burned the sexual parts of women with red-hot plates" The people rose against the Bishops Salonius and Saggitarius, who murdered a fellow bishop on his birthday and beat up their own citizens with clubs till they died Bishop Catinus of Clermont was so drunken he needed four men to carry him about, he shut up a priest in a tomb and left him there to starve because he wanted his property Wine belch and apple-blossom seem a more integral part of Fortunatus's Gaul than do these furious greeds and lusts

Fortunatus wandered about From his verse we learn that he went to Verdun, Reims and Paris, and the gardens of the widowed Queen Ultrogotho He loved gardens, he loved celebrating them and their *paradisiacas rosas* His verse has a subtle and sweet quality when he rings the changes on delicate definitions of flower, scent, leaf

Milder this weather· where soft lisping breezes
shake bland and light for ever the hanging apples

He veered southwards; mindful of S Martin and Tours, where the Bishop welcomed him But he wandered on, and came to Poitiers in 567 There, in a monastery under the young Abbess Agnes, lived Queen Radegunde At the age of eight she had been taken from her home to be brought up as bride for Chlothar, she married him, her brother's murderer, but at last managed to get away and retire to the monastery she had founded The monastery, which became a centre of cultural life was built with all the luxuries of the big Gallic villas, but Radegunde herself lived in many ways an ascetic life, studying hard and dressing the diseased with her own hands Fortunatus found a ready reception at the monastery, and was so won over by the ladies and their gracious life that he stayed on—and was still there at

his death about 600. Radegunde died about 587, and a few years before his death Fortunatus became Bishop of Poitiers.

We have a large number of the poems he wrote for Radegunde—poems about food and flowers, poems about the woman whom he accepted as symbol and fact of the good life. The nuns sent him choice supplies of food, and he dined with them:

> The tables better pleased with lack of coverlets:
> embroidered rich with various pleasant smells.

He replies with an adroit verse of thanks, or he learns to weave osier-baskets to fill with chestnuts for his friends, or he makes a posy from the field-flowers or the flowers of his own small garden, or he picks wild plums in the woods, or asks for a modest violet not to be disdained. He suffers when the Lenten retreats take the ladies from him. The emotion of religious dedication is, of course, involved; he feels that these women are somehow living in the light of a better purpose than are the people of the courts and markets. He admires the clear, sweet light of a gentle purpose which has put aside ambition and cruelty; and gradually he comes to a stronger personal sense of the meaning of the religious emblems to which they bend. In earlier verses, such as those singing Sigibert's marriage, he plays about with fancies of Cupid and Venus as if he were a Claudian, though he goes on to tell of Brunhildis's conversion. It is only after he has been permeated by the influences of Radegunde and Agnes that he feels the inner meaning of the Christian symbols.

But he is Fortunatus still, without any nagging sense of division or anxieties of sin. He holds to his sense of the loveliness of earth, the sanctity of flowers, the goodness of wine. And so Radegunde, worshipping at Easter, is to him more than a personification of piety and witness of a redeeming force in life; she is herself the very force of renewal, the very breath of redemption. She is the cleansing flame in a human darkness, but she is also the sister of the flowers, and her hair nets the glittering world of happy spring. *Omnia plena tamen te redeunte nitent*. She is the Earth-Mother as well as the Bride of Christ; she is the undefiled body of enjoyment as well as the dedicated spirit of a new unity.

Only by grasping this point can we grasp the meaning of

One of them was written in iambic dimeters, the other in trochaic tetrameters. "It is profoundly significant that these poems were composed in 'popular' measures, one in the metre chosen by Ambrose and the other by Hilary of Poitiers for the earliest Latin hymns. These, too, were the metres that lent themselves most easily to rhythmical schemes and to the ornament of rhyme. In the *Vexilla regis* Fortunatus broke naturally into rhymed couplets; in the *Pange lingua* it is the rhythm of the Roman soldiers' marching songs that becomes the music of his processional."[21]

The reason why Fortunatus is the natural culmination of the cultural arc we have traced will now have become clearer. The impact of popular forces which showed itself most obviously in the use of trochaic tetrameters and iambic dimeters has now worked itself thoroughly into the whole texture of culture. In the process the whole of the upper levels of culture have been slowly and intricately transformed. It is impossible to chart any simple pattern of change in all this movement. But it is possible to pick out certain decisive movements, certain undulations of movement forward and backward, certain criss-crossings of diverse influences, social and intellectual, and out of the tangle we can begin to grasp something of the changes as a whole—to realise what had happened to men, to society and to character, in the period between Ausonius and Fortunatus, as if one saw a single curve and break of a wave of time.

In Fortunatus we meet a fruitful marriage of the main trends we have traced. He hails the new symbol of human unity, the Cross, as the force *fertilitate potens*; and at the same time he maintains his faith in the future of civilisation, of society. To Duke Lupus he writes: "With you leading, thus Rome returns to us." *Roma redit.*

ISIDORE OF SEVILLE

INTRODUCTION TO HIS LIBRARY

Here holy things and things of the world abound
then take and read what length of song you please

Thorn-patch and flower-depths this field discloses
If *you object to thorns, pluck only roses*

Here luminous the twin books-of-law are found,
new things and old things jostle at their ease

ANON.

WESTWIND
(From Hisperica Famina)

Roaring Westwind downbows
            oaks with strong-cherishing boughs
old knotty holmoaks harrows
            flat to the furrows
stoutly snorting harms
            crested thatch of farms
cracks
            topmost tiles on the chimney-stacks
raves
            thrashing earth with blue waves
and carries high
            foamdrops on the starry sky

S COLUMBA

ANCIENT OF DAYS

Ancient of Days on high,
our Father in the sky,
uncaused, no time we find
before Him or behind

He is, and He will be
for all eternity.
With Him in Heaven sufficed
the Word and only Christ:
infinite joys they count,
Godhead's unceasing fount.
Not upon Three we call,
but Him whose power is All.

Beneficent He made
Angels of every grade,
Archangels, and with these,
Thrones, Principalities,
Virtues and Powers, free
in ceaseless energy
that the Triune might give
the strength by which we live,
and in mankind reveal
Heaven's privilege, the zeal
creating us each hour
out of that word of power

Clanging from heaven's height,
from buttresses of light,
the angels' mustering place,
dimmed in His glorious face,
that God has made so well,
through pride Lucifer fell
and sadly with him drew
apostate angels too,
vaingloriously he erred,
his envious heart was stirred
The faithful angels stayed
in regiments arrayed

Deep in the gulf is rolled
the Dragon, foul and old,
the glistening snake of slime,
far shrewder in his crime

than other beasts that go
ravening to and fro
A third part of the stars
now look through darkening bars
he lured them into hells
and diverse prison-cells,
fugitives out of light,
hurled with the Parasite

Eternally God knew
the frame and order due
The sky and earth He made,
the ocean beds He laid
the grass seeds and the trees
the springing shrubberies,
sun, moon the starry ring
fire and each needed thing
the fishes and the birds,
the beast and cattle herds
and man first formed with power
to pierce the future hour

Flooding the air with praise,
the angel told His ways
as soon as stars were set
aloft, a shining net,
the universe He'd made
with Heaven's signs displayed
They strove still to proclaim
His great and worthy name
their gratitude they poured
nobly before the Lord
Out of love's choice they spoke,
not slaves of Nature's yoke

Gravely our Parents failed.
The Devil who assailed
then fell a second time
with those who helped the crime

O dreadful Faces, Things
loud with a rush of wings,
they strike a chilly dart
of horror in man's heart.
The eyes of flesh must close
before the gaze of those
who, bound with hurdles, lie
deep in some prison-sty.

Hurled out was he and cast
down by the Lord at last:
his space of air was crammed
thickly with devils damned,
his rebel-comrades haled
in whirls confused but veiled
lest men should be beguiled
to imitate, defiled,
and though no wall or screen
protected them unseen
should down to lewdness fall
before the eyes of all.

In three great tides of force,
drawn from the ocean source,
the clouds of tempest-gloom
with winter-floods up-loom.
The azure whirlwinds rise
with moisture to the skies,
to bless the harvest-lines,
the blossoms and the vines,
driven by blasts that rave
out of the treasure-cave
and drain the ocean-waste
that's opportunely placed.

Kings with their tottering might,
a flash of conquering light,
have earthly period
set by the will of God.

Giants, as legends tell,
groan in a watery cell
with tortures *never spent*
in flame and punishment.
Choked by the billowy roll
round the Charybdis-hole,
while Scylla threats, in grief
they're smashed by surf and reef

Low come the clouds with rain
bound in their wombs again,
lest, suddenly let fall
the streams should drown us all
Food for the earth they share
as if from breasts of air,
slowly the water spreads
along earth's river beds,
warmer at times or cold
as seasons are unrolled
the earth with water teems,
unfailing flow the streams

Moved by God's might, the earth
hangs with its heavy girth
divinely held by grace
there in the void of space
His hands of power keep
the round of the great deep
supported, while for base
forelands and cliffs we trace
with columns roughly thrown
huge bastions of stone
strength upon strength was called
to see it *firmly walled*

No man could doubt the site
of hell is *bottomless night*,
of lowest depths a tomb
of worms and beasts of doom

where flames of brimstone glower
and infinitely devour,
where men are whelmed beneath
with tears and gnashing teeth,
where horribly goes by
Gehenna's ancient cry,
where flaming men are cursed
with hunger and with thirst.

Of men that breed below
the width of earth we know;
we read that every day
they kneel to God and pray.
Yet we can't make them look
on God's own written Book
with seven seals full-sealed
as Christ long past revealed—
the Book unsealed when He
arose victoriously
fulfilling what was said
of Him alive and dead.

Paradise came to birth
when God first made the earth:
Genesis splendidly
relates the history.
Four streams ran murmuring
out of the midmost spring.
Deep in a shade of flowers
Life's Tree passed sunny hours:
its leaves, which bear for all
salvation, never fall.
No tongue can tell the joys,
so rich, where nothing cloys.

Quaking to tread so high
who's climbed God's Sinai?
Who's heard the thunder-roar
breaking on heaven's shore?

Who's heard in mighty blast
the Trumpets of the Vast?
who's seen the lightning gyre
in jagged bursts of fire,
the flashing bolts, the shocks
of thunder riven rocks?
Who except Moses led
as judge at Israel's head?

Raging, the King of Kings
draws near The day He brings
is loud with vengeful might,
darkness and cloudy night
Day of most marvellous things,
terrible thunderings,
narrowing agony,
and grief that none may flee!
Then love of women dies
stilled are all yearning cries
No strife can stir the dust
of men, and no more lust.

Soon trembling we shall meet
at the Lord's judgment seat
and tell no longer hid
all that we thought or did,
seeing our sins arise
living before our eyes
while open to our hand
the books of conscience stand
then bitterly our tears
and sobs will show our fears,
gone all the means to bless
our souls with righteousness

Trumpeting through the skies,
the First Archangel flies
Sepulchres graveyards, all
break open at the call

thawing the death chill spread
over the many dead
From all the compass points
bones whirl towards their joints,
the souls of aether stray
to meet them on the way,
the bones and flesh that roam
at last returning home

Under the heaven's crest
Orion wanders west
the Pleiads, richly signed,
are drifting far behind
through Thetis' depths they sink,
over the eastern brink
along the certain track
Vesper comes spiring back
now, the third year he's spied
dawn's star at eventide
These symbols show afar
the coming of our Star

Christ will come sweeping by
down ladders of the sky
Gleaming His host will bear
the Cross for standard there
The two great Eyes of light
will then be stopped with night,
stars falling we shall see
like figs from off a tree
The earth beneath our feet
will burn with furnace heat
and men will hide with pain
in bowelled hills in vain

Yes, hymns will then be cried
loudly on every side
while countless angels throng
with sacred dance and song

The four great beasts will rise
struck full of burning eyes
and, blest, will come to adore
the greybeards twenty-four
the Lamb of God will tread
the crown from each man's head
Thus thrice rung praise will be
raised to the Trinity

Zealously fire will try
the villains who deny
From God the Father came
the Christ that we acclaim.
But upwards, when we've soared,
we'll greet our Saviour-Lord.
There we'll be ranked at ease
in ordered dignities
according to the worth
of service spent on earth,
and there in glory we
will rest eternally

VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS

TO GOGO REFUSING FURTHER FOOD

Bread, nectar, vestments, faith and logic, wine
these bounties, Gogo, in your house are spread
You talk like Cicero like Apicius dine,
as full of words as you are warmly fed
But now forgive me Swollen with beef, I brood.
when flesh becomes embroiled, a contest's born,
on bulls no geese or capons may intrude,
for wings can't fairly fight against a horn.
My eyelids droop and slumbrously I sink.
My sleepy poem shows the way I blink.

TO THE KING'S COOK WHO COMMANDEERED THE BOAT

(so that the poet had to voyage to Nauriac in a leaky tub)

Black-hearted, caked with smoke and streaked with soot,
he's certainly a dirty-stewing man.
His own utensils paint him sordid brute,
pot with three feet and greasy frying-pan.
Unworthy of verse; a charcoal-sketch instead
will aptly show the fellow's pitchy head.

TO RUCCO, A DEACON LATELY ORDAINED PRIEST

Good Rucco, God's strong minister you stand;
your holy work I hasten to commend.
The swelling waters boom about this land,
but you at Paris spend your days, my friend.
You watch the Seine, I'm hemmed by Breton waves;
we're close in love, though far our limbs may be.
Your face is here, although the Ocean raves;
the north wind cannot wrest your name from me.
Your image seeks my heart, its loving home,
at every howl as wintry billows roll.
The east wind swirls and lifts the darkening foam:
so, lacking you, my comrade, looks my soul.

TO RADEGUNDE WITH HERBS AND VIOLETS

If lilies now had come to candid birth
or roses, soft with crimson, met the eye,
grown wild or plucked from my small plot of earth,
I'd send them, lowly things, to one so high.
But lacking these, with humbler herbs I'll try.
Love makes a vetch a rose; and as you'll see
amid these fragrant herbs of mine there lie
the purple violets for nobility.
For they both breathe a royal murex-dye
and tinge with grace and scent the greenery:
two qualities that we may know you by.
Their beauty is a scent eternally.

TO THE SAME WITH A PRESENT OF FLOWERS

Great Queen, who scorn all gold and purple show,
with trivial flowers your worshipper makes bold
Substance may lack, yet here's the authentic glow,
purple in violets and in crocus gold
For love of God you leave all worldly dowers
yet, mocking wealth, you'll take this gift from me
Accept a richness made of varying flowers,
a gift preferred by your austerity
For, mortified, in light you'll earn rebirth.
Here is a little piece of heaven's field
these fragile boughs, emitting scents of earth,
show you the fragrance that the heavens yield

Lady, when you have reached that merited place,
draw me in after you with kindly hand.
Though paradisal flowers await your face,
see how your flowers-of-earth expectant stand
Come out of doors Though scents suggest the skies,
these flowers make toilet but to catch your eyes

TO RADEGUNDE ON HER RETREAT

The convent's life, God pregnant in your mind,
you feed the soul and bid the body burn
The vow comes round you're gone to-day, we find.
My thoughts, astray, are begging your return

How quickly from our eyes the light has flown!
Clouds, when you go oppress my life with doubt.
Strictly you keep your narrow cell alone
we are most with you, when you shut us out.

For these few days unbroken rest you've earned,
though here the month seems more than all the year
Time you disdain as if no lover yearned,
for with my eyes I love you when we're near

Still, mated in our pieties, we meet:
in mind I follow where the flesh denies.
May Easter joys conclude your long retreat
and festal light make twins within our eyes.

TO RADEGUNDE ON HER RETURN

O whence returns this face of light to me?
Why such a lengthening darkness of delay?
You now return the joys you took in fee,
I celebrate the Easter twice to-day.
Along the furrow's edge the seedlings climb,
yet fruits I pluck and corn of peace is sheaved;
for, when you come, the day is harvest-time.
In April August's labour is achieved.

While bud and tendril tenderly unclose,
my autumn's here, my grapes are ripening now.
Apple and pear enrich the orchard-rows,
though still the blossom whitens on the bough.
For bare and barren lies the unglistening field,
yet, when you come, I find a plenteous yield.

ON A FRAGMENT OF THE TRUE CROSS

The King's *advancing banners wave!*
The Cross gleams out its Mystery
where He that made the body gave
His body to the gallows-tree. ♦

With jagged nails His flesh is torn.
Offering *broken feet and hands*
as sign that our redemption's born,
the sacrifice perfected stands.

The lance has pierced Him in the side,
the cruel edge has entered in.
Our *wounds of guilt are cleansed*, the tide
of blood and water laves our sin.

This truth was anciently foretold
Now David's prophecy proves good,
that cried to all the world Behold,
God ruled us from a throne of wood

O beautiful and radiant Tree!
draped with His kingly crimson-dye
He chose the wood that worthily
might lift such holy flesh on high

O blessed! in your arms was laid
the ransom of the ages, Christ
He bore us out of hell You weighed
in scales of death those limbs unpriced

Around your wood sweet odours pour
Your nectarous sap is death's defeat
Glad in the fertile fruit you bore,
you love the triumph you complete

Altar and victim, hail to you!
O glorious was His abject pain!
Life out of death His victory drew
and life in death is made our gain

WITH CHESTNUTS

This basket, woven by my hands, is new
Mother and sister, dear ones, turn to me
This country produce I have packed for you
soft chestnuts gathered from my chestnut tree

WITH PLUMS

Black plums they call the eatables I send
Don't think them worthless yielded by my trees,
but take the woodland dainties from your friend,
better will ripen yet, and they will please

But have no fear. On airy boughs they grew.
Trees, and not fungused earth, produced their sheen.
I could not be uncouth and worry you:
open your mouth and eat, for they are clean.

WITH A REQUEST THAT SHE SHOULD DRINK SOME WINE

If faith and holy love can win their need,
bend to your votaries, gracious and benign.
Here's Fortunatus. Agnes guides his reed.
When you are weary, drink a little wine.
As God may always grant your earnest prayer,
and we that plead enjoy the love we earn—
drop all your anger, note what we declare
and raise your children humbled with concern.
O not for palate-greed, but purely swayed,
sip to relax your bowels when they ail.
Thus Paul, that trumpet of the nations, bade
Timothy, whose digestion chanced to fail.

SOME AFTER-DINNER VERSES

With gorgeous smells of food to cloud my brain,
I drowsed away (in bed, for all I knew).
I opened mouth and shut my eyes again,
and, dreaming thickly, never ceased to chew.

Dear ones, a head confused and hot I plead.
The words refused obedience to my call.
My fingers could not guide a poet's reed,
my drunken hand produced a wandering scrawl.

Mother and sister, ease a fuddled man.
Across a sea of wine the table swims.
Yet I'll compose, as clearly as I can,
a line or two, although my eyesight dims.

Though sleep is tugging at a thousand reins,
love holds my hand and bids me take these pains.

The Saint, it chanced, had stopped before a house,
he went to enter, at the threshold paused,
scenting a dreadful demon's shadow there
A cook, possessed, had grown a ravening beast,
biting his comrades and himself for food
The others ran and feared to cross his path,
scarcely escaping safe for all their speed
and pleased enough to win unbitten out
Our iron-heart, God s soldier, Martin, stood
and would not budge nor let the maniac pass
He bade the Thing of gnashing plague to halt,
thrusting his holy fingers in its mouth
"Here, wolf of evil, here is offered food
Elsewhere you hunt, here's meat between your teeth."
The jaws of fury slowly opened out,
they dared not bite Gaping, the beast was held
and feared the touch of flesh it longed to tear
The cornered spirit was convulsed with pain
yet might not pass the mouth those fingers closed
Then, leaving trails of foulness on the air,
the filthy presence backed through filth away,
blasting an outlet fit for driven fiends

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8 *Trobador* Fortunatus has been described as the first of the Trobadors The description is happy In the nun Radegunde he sees the image of an earth of lovely plentitude, which he can possess only by renunciation He thus foreshadows the Trobador ethic in which the beloved is realised by the poignant experience of loss and distance His voice seems speaking again when Bernard de Ventadour sees fulfilment in loss summer in winter "The frost appears a blossom of white My fortune sprouts with the tree." The accepting heart holds the clue to a total transformation "My heart's so filled with deep delight it changes all I see "

Here is the perfect example of the way in which the poets of our period are laying hold on the future It is not simply that

they chance to anticipate certain aspects By bringing together all that is most vital in their world, they strike out the lines on which alone men can fruitfully move forward into the unknown Out of an infinite crisscrossing of possibilities in the struggling welter of life, they select those which can most powerfully knit the suble knot which makes up man Thus they defeat chaos and regression, and facilitate the emergence of the full new integration

9

LAST WORDS

1 *Setting of the Problem* What then is our verdict? We have traversed this arc of a shattered culture and found that any effort to state the movement in terms of a single graph is hopelessly inadequate To the classical scholar who judges the whole process in terms of the Vergilian ordonnance that graph may indeed appear a roughly correct way of stating the cultural progress or regress. But as soon as we give up the Vergilian norm as inapplicable to the new problems which men found confronting them, we cannot be satisfied with any summarily simplified judgment

From one angle culture is declining, education is confused, contacts are growing more difficult, a general norm disappears in the welter of tendencies But, on the other hand, the literacy had been losing flexibility, contacts had been failing of fruitfulness, the general norm had been becoming rigid and inhibiting development The problem which men faced was to preserve what was valuable, what was validly organising in the old culture and its methods and to let a maximum of the new possibilities have outlet. Inevitably, this objective was only partially realised Much that was lumber was preserved, much that was valuably potential was destroyed or let run to waste And yet in the last resort the essential part of the old disciplines was held, and the vast new potentiality managed to colour and reorientate the whole field of culture

And yet all the while political and economic disintegration was going on It had by no means reached bed rock in the sixth century, where we end, and the time was soon to come when the groups holding the keys to new cultural integrations would be pushed back into the furthest confines of the Western Empire—the British Isles—with impoverished resources, and it might seem possible that the whole thing would flicker out, the tradition would be lost altogether, and a new painful start would have to

be made from a general barbarism in Europe. However close that danger came, it did not arrive. Northumbria and Wessex nursed the flame which in a few centuries was to spread into the great thriving light of the twelfth century renascence.

When that renascence came, the work which had been done in our centuries was of prime importance. Fusing with a vast new breadth of popular forces, it created medieval culture and founded Europe.

2. *Economic and Cultural Patterns.* Looking back and setting the cultural development against the social and economic changes going on, one sees that there is a broad agreement in the patterns. But only if one takes a very broad view of what constitutes social and economic patterns. If one is thinking of those patterns in a crude way, the development which this book traces is inexplicable; and the only hope for the mechanical thinker is simply to deny that the picture really exists—that the sort of interpretation I have given is at all correct. The mechanical thinker must fall back on the crude graph of decline and coarsening and barbarisation.

But if my interpretation is at all correct, it follows that the social and economic pattern must be understood in a very complicated and fluid way; and that the relation between that very involved pattern and the movements of culture is still more complicated and fluid. But to say this is very different from denying the relation. It is to insist that the analytic instrument must be adequate to a very subtle job.

First, I think it has been made clear that what happens in the movements of culture is not anything which can be shown by a graph at all—by the most ingenious linear design. For what we witness is not the rise and fall of something which can be stated in quantitative terms. Into the linear pattern thrust forces which do much more than cause rises and falls of the lines of movement. Those forces continually impact to bring about new integrations —new qualities.

In one sense, Ausonius is a bad classical poet; in another sense he is a very good anti-classical poet. And in the complete man the bad and not-so-bad classical elements are inextricably mixed with the good and not-so-good anti-classical elements It is not

even a question of new elements appearing amid the old As soon as we get down to detail, we find that in many cases the coarsening of the old is inseparable from the refining of the new, the growing barbarism of knowledge from the new delicate vision which notes the silky ripples of the water weeds in the Moselle

A good case can be put up for the argument that what destroyed ancient society was the institution of slavery, which prevented productive relations and modes from breaking through a certain restricted level of social organisation If we isolate the sphere of our inquiry, the case can be conclusively argued But once we look at the whole human process we see that the problem is more complicated than we have been assuming All that has been said was true but there is more to say Slavery is now seen as a moral, intellectual, spiritual limitation as well as a productive one What prevents the movement forward is a living complex of attitudes, of which slavery is one outstanding social and economic aspect What prevents the movement forward is a spiritual as well as an economic fact, the two are indivisible We realise the total process when we put society and individual of the period over against Nature we then see that the limitations, spiritual and economic, which prevent movement forward are also the organising modes which alone make living possible They cannot be overcome by a simple decision of will, they can be overcome only by the complex working-out of their own inner contradictions and possibilities—the complex assertion of new dominances which facilitate the formative process at work the full crystallisation out of various asymmetrical or contradictory elements so that the movement into a new symmetry, a broader unity, may be stabilised These general terms, too abstract in themselves, must be read in the light of the inquiry we have carried out, the revelation of new social and spiritual polarities emerging from the historical welter of disintegration and prefiguring the resolutions we know as Europe

3 *Changing Relationships* Behind and above and all round the changing forms and qualities of the poetry is the changing world The breakdown of central forms of government in some instances means an increase of governmental controls, the advent of semi-baronial forms means the partial collapse of Roman forms of

private property Vinogradoff notes of the period "by the side of the growth of political patronage in favour of the great goes the growth of economic self-government in favour of the small"— not independence, but the power to control many productive activities[1] Small estates in some cases could meet the storm with greater safety[2] Private contract was in places abandoned for regional and hereditary custom, many of the advantages of communal associations accrued to peasants of extra municipal lordships

The vici of the Code Theodosianus and the recent discoveries as to the organisation of the Asiatic saltus shows that in this case, as in the Western instances communal institutions arose independently of ethnographic causes on the soil of Roman provinces as well as on soil conquered or colonised by Germans or Slavs The institutions were generated by several facts which recur in all the instances of which we have been speaking tribal survivals extensive semi pastoral methods of husbandry settlements which involved a good deal of intermixture of rights the necessity for territorial lords to organise their districts and possessions not on the principle of the steward s absolute rule but on that of tributary self-government[3]

There were many gradations in these arrangements, and the obscurity of their origins makes precise definition rash e g the attempt which has been made by Russian scholars to explain as a Slav intrusion the difference between the Novellae of Justinian (with the Roman concept of private property) and the communal peasant organisations recognised by the *Nomos Georgikoe* of the Iconoclast emperors and later charters

I cite these exchanges of profound basic changes going on in the Empire, not in any attempt to cover the subject or give anything like an idea of their complex interaction over a long period, but simply to emphasise the general point that profound basic changes were in fact going on and that very often those changes involved a growth of communal rights It is as if the forces of the *Romanum Imperium*, spread too thinly over a huge area, were drawn to breaking point by the continual influx of new barbarians The result was no mere collapse The thin upper crust kept on being reformed after each shock, but always more thinly Underneath, the Empire was breaking up into new regional and dominial units, in which weakness of official control tended to encourage the building of communal forms among the drawn together producers A weakness in control begot the basis of

a much closer texture of living in various units, out of which in time a vastly richer society could arise [4]

E Meyer states what happened in the breakdown of the Empire as follows

> The leadership slips from the hands of the cultivated class because they have lost the power to carry out the tasks facing them. They have nothing more to give the world. intellectual life falls away in the trifling occupation of the otic government is given up to the professional civil servants while as for the sword they had let it drop from their hands and have shifted the duty of military service—which in their view is unworthy of a cultivated world peacefully looking after its own affairs—on to the backs of the culturally lowest levels of the population and, finally on to those of mercenaries recruited from outside the frontiers
>
> The rise of the religious movement and the triumph of Christianity is merely the reverse side of the unlimited extension of the military régime since the times of Severus and Caracalla and after them the Illyrians in the third century The State fashioned by Augustus had been founded on the conception that the upper classes had a vocation to bear rule as and when these upper classes fail the decision falls into the hands of the gross loutish masses and the ascendancy of the masses carries with it an ascendancy of the outlooks and feelings by which these masses are governed (consciously or unconsciously) and of an intellectual and religious life shaped to fit the needs of the masses [5]

Take away from that statement the attitude of contempt for the masses and its assumption that the Empire fails because the upper classes become unfit to rule and one has a true enough statement of what happened Certain intellectual values were lost in the process, just as the expansive virtues of the Augustan age were lost in a failing economy and an unstable central government But the fall into a lower level of intellectual clarity is only half the picture, that fall is itself shot through at every section with new colorations, new qualities new textures of spiritual union which are the sole real pledge of an advance to a fuller intellectual life It is this mass texture which breaks through the old structures with the radiant hint of new integrations The creative synthesis in Augustine shows a vital depth a comprehensive energy, for which there is no parallel whatever in the thinking of the secular Romans Meyer's upper classes

Seeck too, makes a very one sided and distorted analysis when he describes the process as the 'elimination of the élite an end to the progress of thought which had gone on on the upper

levels of society, an uprush of Oriental religions "from the dregs of the people"—whores and loose-livers following Isis, and slaves, pirates, common soldiers following Mithras—and philosophy dragged down by the rise of "spiritual paupers" to defend things it had formerly condemned Bergson comes closer to the truth when he speaks of the failure of the ancient thinkers—Seeck's élite—to abstract from their geometrical work a scientific method or to advance from statics to dynamics They "simply pushed to the extreme limit a simulation of dynamics in static terms" A similar inability to make the decisive leap into new organising centres of experience appears in Stoicism and its brotherhood Christianity, Bergson says, made the leap And he might have added that in making that leap it provided the basis for the leap which science in due time was to make into dynamics and the whole of its modern attitudes The Christian break-through, we have abundantly seen, *was not a simple advance, it was in many ways* destructive and limiting, and yet it was the only way in which the weaknesses of ancient culture, tied down to a slave economy, could ultimately be overcome *

I throw those generalisations out as a guide in the tangle of actual developments, but they must be understood as covering many hundreds of years, with ceaseless pressures of cohesion and disintegration The working out was enormously complex

It follows from these remarks that to understand how such forces as those of Fronto and Appuleius could break through in the second century and how a continual series of shaping energies could keep on playing on the stream of cultural development, we should have to analyse minutely all the changes in land tenure in the Empire, all the shifting nexus of association, the relations of family life to these changes the over all convulsions and controls of the political and legal systems which also went through a tangled series of shifting holds and relaxings Penetrating all these relationships run the basic productive relationships and their changes Only if we could comprehend the interaction and involved movements of such multiple forces within the full unity of historical (human) process, could we *hope to explain in any satisfying way the connection between* the cultural pattern and the social pattern But even from the remarks made above it will be clear how a general political and

economic breaking-up, which from the top level appears as pure loss, can be seen in fact the source of a fuller and more actively communalised life among large sections of the people once we get down to the level of concrete daily experience And in turn the new bases of activity, knitting men together locally, provide in the long run the material for a much more effective centralisation

The cultural evidence, then, goes far to support the thesis that from the second century A D onward the Empire was moving towards medieval forms Inside the Empire, in a complex network of forces which include both the mercantile expansion and the mercantile contraction, the decisive movement towards a closer texture of social and productive relationships had begun In this movement, submerged tribal unions come into the open again, taking on a new colour in their assertion of customary rights and communal methods Other new productive unions are built up by the need of men to get together and enforce common rights and duties The irruption of Germanic tribal groups in some cases upsets this development, in other cases it speeds it up in the involved impacts of tribal rights and Roman law on one another In the North, in England and Flanders and Germany, the new tribal groups are held much more intact, and a clearer development occurs out of tribalism. But every section, southern or northern, plays its part in the full medieval integration the achievement of a stabler and broader level of productive energies That achievement defeats the pull back into the old cycles, keeps slavery from exerting a central influence in the productive spheres, and makes our Europe possible

4. *New Forms and Forces* How may we summarise the changes that occurred in poetry, in the depths of the human spirit, during our period? First, there was a new sense of people Secondly, a new sense of nature Thirdly, a new sense of history In one way, we can call the changes romantic, they show an interest in the particular, in vivid detail and actual face, in rich colour harmony and yearning aspiration Basic in the changes is a release of lyric form which the classical period (since Catullus) had stifled On to the classical stereotype a violent and hungry mass movement has impacted with new incoherent forms The period described in

this book shows the primary consolidations, out of which something incomparably richer than classical culture was to come. In the same way the final levelling movements of the Empire produced the thickened social texture, the potential co-ordinations from which was to come a burst of productive activity on a far richer scale than antiquity could compass

Without the intense cultural struggle which this book traces there would have been no European future That struggle explains why the world did not swing back into yet another cycle of mercantile capital and slave-industry.

5 *Function of Culture* And that leads on to the further point what part does culture play in all these changes? Does it merely reflect and interpret what is going on in the social and economic spheres, or does it bring to the movement something essential, something active and constructive, which modifies at every point, at every level, the social and economic developments?

This question is not squarely met by saying that out of the social and economic movements arises a certain kind of consciousness by which men interpret their needs, their conflicts and unions, and which therefore becomes a weapon in the struggle That is still to make mind or culture a sort of epiphenomenon, something which comes at the end of a more basic process, it is to think of mind or culture as something added to a "material" or socio economic basis—as something relative to that basis without the basis being in turn relative to mind or culture

On the other hand, if one is thinking of a unity which combines both the socio-economic and the cultural levels, one cannot isolate either of those levels as basic If one level can't work without the other, then the two are dialectically related, and each is equally basic There has never been a "material" or socio-economic activity of man which hasn't also been a cultural activity, and *vice versa* Productive relations and cultural relations are inextricably fused That is, man began to become man when he began to use his mind to establish an active relationship to Nature, and that active relationship which was a productive act, was also a cultural act What we isolate as economic activity is merely the *measurable* aspect of social structure, social process

But though our first step in grasping the nature of culture and

its relation to society must lie in this emphasis on the unity of cultural and productive activity, we must go further to define exactly how culture functions in a society where division of labour has occurred. Consider what we found in our actual examination of Latin culture under the Empire. We found in some respects a certain direct relation between social and political forms and the cultural expression, but we also found related vitally to various deep changes going on in society, the influx of new potential elements which it was hard to relate to the ruling social and political forms, but which became easy to grasp as soon as we related them to the future—say, to the twelfth century.

Out of the tensions between the ruling social and political forms, with their set cultural correlatives, and the new restless confused forces which are breaking through, there emerge new possibilities. And it is these new possibilities which begin increasingly to find expression in the cultural field. We are not concerned with blue prints, theoretical statements of the line that history will follow or ought to follow—though in many forms, religious, utopian and directly political, such statements play their part. Rather, it is a matter of culture setting about to integrate the various elements of new experience in a whole which combines tradition and the new possibilities. Thus culture integrates the human whole for the adventure into the unknown. Thus culture realises the future before it comes into existence. Feeling out along the lines of the possible—not in any abstract way, though abstractions are involved—it tentatively stretches out here and there, experimenting, rejecting, finding points of stability and holding fast to them. But it does not do this in a purely mental space, where possibilities are abstractly apprehended and explored. Not even mathematics works along such rootless lines as those. We have turned down the idea that culture merely reflects or interprets the already achieved social and economic basis, but we must not make the equal and opposite mistake of thinking that culture can move along abstract lines of choice. True, certain forms can develop a momentum of their own which may seem at moments to carry them along in a self-contained space, and there is an element of truth in the seeming. But that momentum cannot continue indefinitely. We must

always think of culture and production as indissolubly linked—for between the two is expressed the degree and extent of human mastery of Nature.

The active relation to Nature involves the continual release of surplus energy, which is transformed into cultural expression and extended productive action. The process is one of a ceaseless and infinitely complex series of transformations going on at all levels, with the clue at one end in the organic unity of the body—though that unity must never be abstracted as a thing-in-itself. It exists in continual inner change, in continually-changing symbiosis, in continually-shifting relation to society. Knowledge is a process of the individual, but is also a social process.

These remarks, highly generalised as they are, may yet give some pointers to the business of understanding the historical movements with which this book has dealt. True, we see culture hard at work interpreting a difficult world to men; but in interpreting, the poet is also creating. He is grasping to the best of his ability the potential elements in himself and his world. His hunger for harmony reaches into various possible integrations, and makes the present liveable in as well as projecting various essential elements of the future. His definition reaches back along certain lines of tradition, it grasps the centre of actual living, and it apprehends certain leading lines of the future. Integration must include all three aspects, and as soon as we understand that, we have discovered the real freedom of art, its really creative function within the historical whole where it works.

NOTES

Chapter 1

1. F. Schulz, *Hist of Roman Legal Science* (1946).

2 E. Kitzinger, *Early Med Art* (B M , 1940), 6 *f*

3. Industry and commerce never quite respectable at Rome L. Goldschmidt, *Handelsgesch* (3rd ed., 1891), 59 For the crews P Charlesworth, *Trade-routes and Commerce of R. Empire* (2nd ed , 1926) 178, 202, 220, 238

4. P. Glotz, *Le Travail dans la Grèce antique* (1920).

5 P. Giraud, *Études écon sur l antiq* (1905)

6 F Lot, *La Fin du monde ant* (1927), 95 With V. the Empire ceases to be Italian, it becomes Latin. With Trajan (to some extent Nerva) the State interferes with local self government (F Oertel, *C.A H* xii, 259)

7 *Camb Anc Hist* (xiii), 252, "When the limits of the *oikoumene* (civilised area) were reached, industry should have exploited the internal market more actively and should have extended its scope to include the lower classes This would, however, have required a modification of the social structure of the Empire."

8 V Gordon Childe, *What Happened in History* (1942), 248, 250 I am not concerned here to argue the exact relation of slavery (among artisans, miners etc.) to the structure of expansion and contraction in the money-economy, and to industrial technique (or lack of it), the part played by exactions from the peasantry, dispersion of industry, military burdens etc , in creating the economic impasse. It is enough to point out that the economic formations cannot be separated from the cultural.

8a Heitland means much the same as this when he attributes the fall of the Empire to the "Roman Fate"—meaning the totality of factors within which the Romans lived (*The Roman Fate*, 1922; *Iterum*, 1925 *Last Words on the Roman Municipalities*, 1928)—In art, religion, etc., men can dream a resolution far beyond the historical possibilities that dream is basically important for both present and future, but the actual movement cannot make that full leap

9. Lot, 63 *f*, E. Babelon, *Traité des monnaies grec et rom* (1901) But after Constantine the *solidus* held for some thousand years the med. bezant was still 1/72 lb gold.

10. A. Blanchet, *Les enceintes rom de la Gaule* (1907), 284, H Nissen in *Bonner Jahrb* t. xcv (1894), 1–28, Lot, 82 For full discussion of decay, Rostovtzeff, *Soc and Econ Hist of R. E* (esp Ch. xii).

11 They collected taxes from dependents (Seeck, *Schatzungsordnung Diocletians*, 317). The big estate was a *saltus*, or a *latifundia* (*massa*)—an aggregation of *fundi*,

farms. *Saltus* were backward, often outside urban area. Pelham, *Imp. Domains and the Colonate* (1912). In general, Kübler, article "Decurio" in Pauly-Wissowa.

12. The need of a large standing army increased the downward pressure. Septimius Severus left the precept, "Enrich the army and don't bother about the rest"; Severus Alexander, "The soldier must have a full purse."

13. S. Dill, *Rom. Soc. in Last Cent.* (and ed) 276 *f.* On the essential work done by the later emperors to save civilisation: F. M. Heichelheim, *Wirtschaftsgesch. d. Alt.* (1938), i. 772. For the levelling trends, E. Meyer, *Kleine Schrifte*, i. 144.

14 J. B. Bury, *Selected Essays*, 64. For numbers of Christians, Latourette, *Expansion of Christianity*, i. 95 and 86; Gibbon (ed. Bury), ii, 65; Mumford, *Condition of Man* (65)

15. Rostowzew, *Stud. zur Gesch. des röm. Kolonates* (1910). The tenants went with land-sale; slaves were bound to soil.

16. For the "absolute monarchy, theocratic and bureaucratic at the same time" from the East, Cumont, *Oriental Rels. in R. Paganism*, 5. The Church continued this role during the invasions, taking absolutist view in relation to the barbarian kingships (Ziegler, *Church and State in Visigothic Spain* (1930), 101). It introduced consecration of the king M. Bloch, *Les Rois thaumaturges* (1924), 461.

17. H. Pirenne, *Mohammed and Charlemagne* (1939), 54.

18. T. R Glover, *Life and Letters in the Fourth Cent.*, "Ausonius "

19 Boissier, *La Fin du Paganism* (1891), i. 188 and 199, Roger, *L'enseignement des lettres class* (1905), 25 *f.*

20. V, 427 and 434, Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa* (1898), 248, 276.

21. *The Suasoriae of Seneca the Elder*, W A. Edward (1928), D. Nisard, *Etudes sur les poètes lat. de la Décadence* (3rd ed , 1867), ii, 35–9.

22. Lot, 186.

23. Boissier, *La Fin*, i 221; A. Drews, *Plotin u d. Untergang* (1907), P -R. Cole, *Later Rom Educ.* (1909), C. von Schanz, *Röm Lit. gesch.* (2nd ed., 4th pt.), 546; Dill, 427

"*Non vitae sed scholae discimus*," Seneca *Epist* , cvi. 12, cf. Juvenal, vii 150 and x 166

24. Aristotle, in his treatise on rhetoric, starts with stressing the interaction of rhet and dialectic. they are *antistrophos*, equal and opposite

25. Arist. *Rhet* , iii 1 8 *f* and 4, Plato, *Gorgias*; Philostratos, *Lives of the Sophists*, 492, Diod xii 53, Cicero, *Orat* 49, 52, Dionys Hal.

26. Sextus Empiricus, *Adv Math* , vii. 65; and *De Xenoph. Gorgia et Melisso* (anon)

27 For Vergil as the idol of the rhetoricians, see above all Macrobius, *Saturnalia*. Cf. Norden, 857, Servius on *Aen* , x. 18; J. L. Moore, *Amer. J of Philol.* (1891), xii 157 It is in *Peleus and Thetis* that Catullus shows his full assimilation of rhetorical method.

28. Lucretius stands partly outside normal Latin rhet tradition, on account of his closeness to Greek creative science

29 Norden, 248 Tacitus, *Dial de Orat*, 28

30 Tac, *Dial*, 36 1, 38 2, 41 5 *De Sub*, xliv, A Gell, xiii 16, V V. *Anthologiae* (Kroll, 1908), 241 *f* and A Toynbee, *Study of H*, v 424

31 Norden, 832 and 888

32 F J E Raby, *Hist of Secular Latin Poetry* (1934) 1 26 He has a very valuable discussion on which I draw

33 Raby, 28 Catullus, like the Greeks used the couplet to develop a steadily unfolding theme For Ovid Norden 266

34 Seneca, *Contrav*, ix praef 1

35 *De Anima* 39 He sees how the schools had been welded into the State and its ideology *ad prudentiam et liberalia officia*," *Apolog*, 14 Indeed after Quintilian discipline is preached by the schools as the way to rise in the world *Inst orat*, xii 11 29

36 Ambrose, *De Fide*, 1 5 42 Augustine *Sermo*, cxcvii frag 2 cf *Sermo* xliii 5 lxxxvii 10 ccclxxxi ii 14 *C D*, xxii 5, P E More, *Hellenistic Phil Greek Trad from Death of Soc* (1923) 297–9

37 Aug *Conf* ix 4 8 Jerome *Epist*, xxii 30 Boissier, *La Fin* 1 230 and 394 ii 50 176 and 497 Roger, 135 *ff*
R. B Tollington (*Clement of Alex*, 1914, 1, ch x) for way Clement made the Church safe for the wealthy

38 R E Prothero, *Psalms in Human Life* (1904) ch ii for exs

39 Prothero 14 *f* Clement, *Stromata* vii 7, *Letter to Marcella*, Palestine Pilgrims Text Soc, xii

40 J McCabe, *The Testament of Chr Civil* (1946) 7

41 *C I L*, viii 5 530 E S Bouchier *Life and Letters in R Africa* (1913), 35

42 O Bardenhewer, *Gesch d altkirchb Lit* (2nd ed, 1913)

43 H Stuart Jones, *Comp to R Hist*, 140

44 Aug, *Conf*, i 14 Terent. Maur, 1 971

45 Bouchier, 39 *ff* Luxorius, 464 *C I L* 12 925 for dancer Thyas who died at fourteen Tertullian gives list of subjects (Phaeton Judgment of Paris Cybele and Attis, Jove's Loves) probably selections from Greek tragedies Appuleius assumed audience know Philemon and Menander, he describes a Paris ballet in *Met* Private letters still at times written in Greek, second century

46 *De Gub Dei*, vi 69

47 Bouchier, 60

48 Same, 57 *f*

49 'Just when Latin seemed *to be giving way on all hands to Greek* the signs are first seen of a much more momentous change the rise of a new Latin, which not only became the common speech of all Europe, but was the groundwork of the Romance languages and of half a dozen important national literatures" J W Mackail *Latin Lit* (1934 ed) 233

It is clear that the Frontonian crisis arises partly from the fact that Latin is now becoming the real language of the common folk of the Western Empire (For *linguæ franche* in general A Toynbee, *Study of Hist*, v 483 *ff*)

50 For other Africans, Aul Gell xix 10, and Fronto (ed Naber), 169 198 200 The movement attacks Lucan for sterility, Cicero's letters are finer Latin than his speeches, the Augustines are hardly mentioned Plautus, Ennius, Cato Lucretius, Sallust, are admired Fronto wants "*insperata atque inopinata verba*" (63)

For the analysis which sees only the backward look of a declining age in the archaisms H M D Parker, *Hist of R World from 138* (1935) 47 *f*, and Toynbee vi 80 *f* But W M Lindsay points out how lines from the early Latin tragedians are close to those of the Christian accentual hymn e g Ennius, *O magna templa cælitum commixta stellis splendidis* Archaising we see, also meant popularising

51 The use of allegory (Fronto's one on Sleep 228 *ff*, is translated by Pater in *Marius*) is an effort to show mythologising powers in paganism, a real creative element

52 Raby, i 24 Norden, 603

53 See what is said later in rel to Ausonius's *Mosella*

54 64 *f*

55 Cf Mackail 238 on Fronto's allegory 'Alike in the naive and almost childlike simplicity of the general structure and in its minute and intricate ornament like that of a diapered wall or a figured tapestry where hardly an inch of space is ever left blank—this new style is much more akin to the manner of the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries than to that of the class period

56 Raby i 22 *f* says difficult constructions in Tertullian easy if we translate him into Greek (F Skutsch in *Kultur d Gegenwort* i 8) Not an early Latin of the colonisers semitically modified But note how Appuleius feels a sense of different racial culture calling self *semi gaetulus* and *semi numidia* Augustine had Punic speaking sections in his congregations

57 Horace *Epist* i 20 13 for Utica book sales

58 Bouchier 84

59 Florus (age of Hadrian) may be African

60 He was interested in Horace Catullus Vergil and had little respect for the *dulcia opuscula* of contemporaries P Monceaux *Les Africains* (1894) 387ff

61 Boissier, in *Mélanges Renier* (Commodus ')

62 Lot 181 *Bouchier 91 S Gazelee Transition from Late Latin Lyric (1931)* 12 Class Latin verse had corresponded to a transition from a strictly quantitative system like the Greek to the accentual and the accentual or rhythmical tendencies gained fresh strength in the third cent esp affecting the dactylic measures as less in harmony than some others with the genius of the language," Bouchier Commodianus is strict about cesura

63 Mackail 257

64 Revelations has a strong rhythmical element short lines often linked by assonance repetition, or some play of ideas with marked cadence the lines fall into a sort of strophe Loisy, Lohmeyer Couchoud all emphasise the rhythmic element This is important as showing the general rhythmical trend of popular forms in the Empire even in the Greek area (R H Charles *The Rev of St John* (1920) was the first to notice the rhythmic basis)

65 Optatus in his account of *The Donatist Schism* (Migne xi).

66 "Heresy repeatedly carried with it even before Rome took a command ing position, some assertion of local political freedom home rule or nationalist self assertion the theological departure partly rationalised a political motive from Priscillian to Luther" L Mumford, *The Condition of Man* (1944) 70

67 T F Higham Intro to *Oxford Book of Greek Verse in Translation* (1938)

68 F D Allen *Remnants of Early Latin* (1890) 13 Stress-elements seem to have been stronger in pre-homeric Greek verse than in the classical forms but not so strong as in pre-saturnian Latin

69 *The full psychic and organic causes underlying the shifts in verse form* are matters I do not here attempt to examine They are however clearly of the utmost importance in any attempt to get to the core of changes in psychic organisation *In both Greek and Latin (in varying ways)* language is organised *in* close relation to musical form and then re created on a wider rhythmic basis Both major phases represent a mass-formation a new spiritual texture

Chapter 2

1 Lot 79

2 Perdrizet in *Mélanges N Jorga* (1933) 745

3 Ed E Kluge (1926) Bede includes him among classics *De arte metrica* (*Gramm Lat*, vii 258 20)

Rufius Festus Avienus was also fourth cent. an etruscan who versified Aratus s astron poem and a Greek *descriptio orbis*

For Symmachus and his group Dill ch ii Seeck *Symm* It is the same group as that of Macrobius antiquarians enthusiasts for esoteric priestly lore and augury Praetextatus translated the *Analytics* of Aristotle Flavianus wrote *Annals* and translated *The Life of Apollonius* and compiled *De Dogmatibus Philosophorum* Sallustius amended the text of Appuleius. Three brothers from Gaul are among the group one receives the dedication of Claudian s *Rape of P* another is keen on sport but is really ambitious to write a history of his province.

4 Date certainly before Priscian and Cassiodorus wrote gramm tracts *De Asp ratione and Ars de nomino et verbo*

5 See Macrobius *Saturnalia* T Whittaker *Macrobius* (1923) Wissowa *De Mac Sat Fontibus* 41 Schedler *De Phil des M*, 98 Gilbert Murray, *Five Stages* (1935) 139 Cumont *Oriental Rels in R. Pag*, 134 etc

6 F. Brittain, *Med Latin and Romance Lyric*, S. Gazelee, *Transition*, 12; Raby, 1 52

The metre in full name is trochaic tetrameter catalectic. Augustine wrote an alphabetic hymn in the metre, acataleptic form, accentual For Hilary, Gazelee, *Oxford Book of Med Lat Verse*, No 1, and W. Meyer (who disagrees as to attribution). A S Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns* (1922), 5 It was the "one admittedly foreign element" that found its way into the hymnody of the early Irish Church (Bernard and Atkinson, *Irish Liber Hymnorum*, 1897)

"Welcome, Mother . . " is in *Anal Hymn*, liv. 383, "O Redeemer . . ." same, li. 80 "This is the process," Raby

For modern ex of the metre, *Locksley Hall*

All the known verse of Tib is here translated

7 Mackail, 245 The *Vigil* may be earlier, but in my opinion it is more likely fourth than second century.

8 M Schanz, *Gesch d röm Lit* (1920), iv 1, 30.

9 "On the straight" *perpendiculum* mason's plumbline (used similarly by Ammian Marcel, xxix 2 16) ex of colloquial (technical) diction intruding

10 Dill, 407–9 Jullian, *Ausone* (1893) 69, Symm, *Ep*, ix 88

11 R Pichon, *Les Derniers écrivains profanes* (1906), 55, and Jullian, 7. Boissier calls him an "incorrigible versifier"

12 Cf Gibbon, "The poetical fame of Ausonius condemns the taste of the age" Gibbon sees only the lesser aspects, those of declension from the class ideals. Contrast Pichon, "le premier poéte bourgeois et familier en France," 216.

13 Dill, 40, 422, Jullian, 72, Capes, *University Life in Anc Athens*, 60

14 Glover, 110 Boissier, *L'Afrique Rom*, c vi 1 224 Sievers, *Libanius*, 30, 46 Libanius at Athens was kidnapped by other students one evening, who wouldn't let him go till he swore to attach himself to their professor

15 Macrobius and Mart Cap show the general dependence of grammarians on Varro Cf Isidore of Seville later

16 Ammian. Marcel, xviii 1, Sulp Sev, *Sacra Hist*, ii 65 See below, Ch V, and E A Babut, *Priscillien* (1909) The P s were a sect of the Gnostic type (acc to Sulpicius—see Aug, *Ep*, 237, and their hymn in *Acts of S John* M R James, *Apocrypha Anecdota* 2nd S) In 1885 Schpess found a fifth-sixth century MSS with treatises maybe by P himself See Vienna Corpus, xviii, and mongraph by F Paret Their hymn supposed to be spoken by Christ, cries, "I wish to save and to be saved, I wish to loose and to be loosed . I wish to be generated Dance all of you"

17 Diocletian's new system broke the Empire up into four main units (confessing the centrifugal trends) smaller divisions inside the four Ausonius would have had thirty provinces in Italy and twenty nine in Gaul under him

18 Glover 116 *f* A has his share of trick versifying strange word catalogues, not to mention catalogues of things (e g oysters)

19 L A Chaix, *Saint Sidoine Apollinaire* (1867), ii 97. Note above (ch. 1 § 7) and below about Prudentius

64. Revelations has a strong rhythmical element short lines often linked by assonance repetition or some play of ideas with marked cadence the lines fall into a sort of strophe Loisy Lohmeyer Couchoud all emphasise the rhythmic element This is important as showing the general rhythmical trend of popular forms in the Empire even in the Greek area. (R H Charles *The Rev of St John* (1920) was the first to notice the rhythmic basis)

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20 We have one interesting fourth century attempt at a comedy, the lively *Querolus*, which tells how a wily slave and his two accomplices try to trick Q out of his heritage by playing on his superstitious fears but are themselves beguiled by similar fears (ed. L Huet, 1880, see G Cohen, *La com latine en France au XIIe siècle* (i) 1931, R Pichon, *Les dern écriv prof*, 1906, 241) The interest lies partly in the effort to use Plautian forms to satirise contemporary fads and fears, but even more in the synthesising aim. to mix Plautian humours and situations with satirical characterisation within a philosophic framework (Destiny) The author does not unify the material creatively but his aim is none the less remarkable. The slaves makes his final plea after being found out:

> I thieved gave back, was true to you two without dubiety
> I stole from the old chap and gave back to the youth.
> No guile in the fraud true was the theft. So piety
> is clearly affirmed in the theft, and in piety faith.

Chapter 3

1 Manitius, *Gesch der christl lat Poesie* (1891) 64 Pope Damasus (A D 366) wrote neat verses on Jerusalem, some saint hymns, and catacomb inscriptions (Tertullian and Cyprian wrote verses, but those attrib to them are spurious)

At the election of Damasus in 366 several bloody riots occurred D had opponents beaten up killed, exiled got together a gang of gladiators racers and gravediggers besieged the Church of Liberius, set fire to it, killed large numbers of those in it. Later he with his gang attacked opponents meeting in a cemetery (*Libellus Precum* of Faustinus and Marcellinus Migne, xiii. cols 81–4 Jerome, who was for a time Sec to D, in his *Chronicle* year 369 Rufinus *Hist Eccles*, ii 10, Ammian. Marcel., xxvii 12–13) D, nicknamed Tickler of Matron's Ears was charged with Adultery; but the Emp, at the bishops request, quashed the case

2 Lact., *Instit*, v 1 Jerome, *Epist*, lxx 5

3 Glover, 144–6, Schenkl *Proem ad Prob*, *Corp Script Eccles* t xvi

4 A Baudrillart, *S Paulin* (3rd ed., 1914) Labriolle, *La Corresp d A. et de P* (1910) Raby i 64

5 Raby i. 65

6 Damasus was a Spaniard Spain long Romanised, was now fairly well Christianised the folk had strong feeling for local martyrs

7 E.g *Cath*, vi used in church at Passiontide (iambic dimeter catalectic).

8 See the verses on S. Eulalia, which I translate the metre is a dactylic tetrameter dicatalectic, used before by Septimius Serenus a writer on country themes under Hadrian. P uses it in five line stanzas (as he did with iambic trimeters).

In his hexs spondaic lines are common. more like Juvenal than Vergil 'He has a tendency to draggle,' Glover, 274

In *Cath*, ix, we meet our marching trochaics (in three line stanzas).

9 His poem on S. Romulus. The Spanish synod about 306 had condemned provocative martyrdoms.

10 Jerome, *De reg. mon.*, xi; Aug., *De Moribus Eccl. Cath.*, i. 33. Paulinus of Nola in *Ep.*, xxiii, shows excitement over a good vegetarian cook.

11. The Cross of Rambona: E. Strong, *Art in Anc. Rome*, ii (1929), Fig. 582.

12 C. H. Turner, *Camb. Med. Hist.*, i. 151.

13. Gaselee, *Transition*, 14.

14. These dimeters app. used by Laevius (experimentalist of late Republic), as second line in Horace's *Epodes*. Terent. Maur. only cited Alfius Avitus (near his own age), who used it for his *Liber Excellentium*. For the development of the iambic dimeter into the accentual octosyllabic line: P. S. Allen and H. M. Jones, *The Romanesque Lyric* (1928), 306, and Ker, *The Dark Ages*, 204.

15 See refs., *Confessions*, Pusey (Everyman ed.), 187 *f.* "Therefore did I more weep among the singing of the Hymns," says Augustine. For hymns, Walpole, 52, 34, 112.

16. Walpole, 151. The fourth cent. in Italy saw a few polemical Christian poems: *Carmen ad Senatorem* (who had fallen away), etc.

17. S. Angus, *Rel. Quests of the G.-R. World* (1929). Cf. Dobschutz, *Christian Life in the Prim. Church*, 251.

18. Deissmann, *St. Paul*, 44.

19 Raby, i, 9 *f.* Proclus catalogues gods, classifies prayers, turns the figures in the platonic dialogues into allegorical persons, etc.

20 At the funeral of Blaesilla (thought to have had her life shortened by asceticism) the crowd at Rome yelled their hatred of the monks, Jerome, *Ep.*, xxxix. 5.

21 For account of heretics, H. C. Lea, *Hist of Sacerdotal Celibacy* (4th ed., 1932), 37 *f.*, 43, and Ch v. (I cannot here go into Origenism and its concepts of good and evil, which were defeated in the West, by Augustinism. Origen argued that there was always a seed of good in man because whatever is of Being is from God He stood also for a purely figurative view of the Old T.) For the comparison of Jerome's persecuting violence with Lactantius's rejection of force, Valery Larbaud, *Sous l'invocation de S Jérome* (1946), 60 *f.*

22. Lea, 27; *Vita Ant.*, 36, Sulpic., *Dial.*, i 22; Jer., *Ep.*, xxii. 20, and cvii. He wants a child to walk out only to church (*Ep.*, cvii)

23. Paulinus, *Ep.*, xxv. Origen holds Christians may pray for kings, but may not serve them in any role of force; they must decline secular office in interest of God's service, to visit a theatre is a sin *Contra Celsum*, viii 73–5; W. Fairweather, *Origen* (1901), 195

24. For Melania, Glover, 130 *f.*, and Jer., *Ep.*, xxxix. Jerome says she left the child to the praetor urbanus.

25 She returned to Italy at the end of the century and went to Nola from Naples. Paulinus tells how she came in rags attended by people in silk and

purple She lived twenty more years "Fasts and filthinesses" is Glover's phrase (Jerome writes to a girl, *Ep*, cvii 'I say that mature girls must not bathe at all, because they ought to blush to see themselves naked ")

26 A Grenier, *The Roman Spirit*

27 For the poem's effect on med art images, Glover, 264

Chapter 4

1 Glover, 108 *f*

2 And in a jeer at "Egyptian Oracles" consulted by Eunuch Eutropius presumably those of John the Egyptian Hermit (whom Aug tells us E consulted *C D*, v 26) In *To Jacob* the first line refers to the basilica of S Paul completed by Honorius '*sacratum corpore Pauli*"

Orosius (vii 35) calls C "a most stubborn pagan though an outstanding poet,' and Aug (*C D* v 26) calls him 'stranger to Christ's name' Boissier rightly says Christianity is always close to C's thought *La Fin* ii 244. For poss Biblical refs in C Glover, 241 *f* See also E S Duckett *Latin Writers of Fifth Century* (1930) 31–5

3 E g *Cons Stil*, iii 205 Symmachus's protest in 384 against the altar's abolition *is perhaps the noblest defence of a dying creed that has ever been* made," F W Hall *Comp to Class Texts* (1913) 65 Macrobius in *Saturnalia* gives the critical apologia of this aristocratic Fronde" against Christianity he seems born in Greek speaking part of Empire He expounds faith in solar monotheism and rhetorical techniques

4 Norden c.f Boissier, *La Fin*, ii 238 Augustine tells of a Syrian bred to Greek rhetoric who became famous teacher of Latin eloquence A dedicated his first book to him Glover, 218

5 *De Bello Gild*, 17 *ff* *In Eutrop*, i 371 *ff* Crees *C as Hist Authority*

6 Pater (*Greek Studies*) thinks Ovid superior an instance of the utmost bad taste

7 Boissier ii 253 Glover, 236 F W Hall (*Class Rev*, February–March, 1922 32) with a half truth says 'These men kept alive the anc learning long enough for the Chr Church to recover its senses and breed up men of the type of Cassiodorus '

8 Priscus *Hist of His Own Time* (*Hist Gr Min*, ed L. Dindorf, 1870), i 305–9

9 Norden *Kunstprosa* 889 384 Raby i, 26

10 Note Ausonius s use of Magnet near end of *Mosella* Raby notes (i 95) 'the constant stream of this minor verse" on queer objects etc, was of great importance ' for the study of secular poetry in the Middle Ages " but he is thinking only in terms of subject matter not of the relation to alchemic ideas, etc.

11 Seneca *Ep*, xlii I Ovid Am., ii 6 54 and *Met*, xv 393 Stat, *Silv*, ii 4. 36, Pliny, x 2 2 3 Tac., *Ann*, vi 28 Aur Vict., *Caesar*, 4 Claud

Sid ii 414 For the Dionysiac origins J Hubaux and M Leroy, Vulgo nascetur amomum' *Mélanges Bidez* 505–29 For the relation in Egypt to the Sothic period *J E S* (October, 1925) 346

12 Two examples Pagan religion (cult of Asklepios etc.) with temple hospitals With the Empire arose public hospitals *valetudinaria* of a secular kind the best organised the military ones In the fourth cent a Christian lady Fabiola built one thus starting the medieval tradition of hospital foundation (plan of a projected one at S Gall early ninth cent) Singer in *Legacy of Rome* ed. C Bailey (1923) 293–6

The Christian basilica came out of the pagan mystery basilica G Leroux, *Les origines de l Edifice hypostyle* (1913) 318 *ff* *J Rom Stud*, ix (1919) 78 *ff*

13 J Geffken *Der Ausgang des griech r m Heidentums* (1920) *113 131*

14 Raby i 9 and 7

15 R Lloyd *The Golden Middle Age* (1939) 75

16 Nisard Edition (1884) 773 R is anti Stilicho (Note how he turns the Horatian phrase about the Greeks leading captive their Roman captors into his vituperative line that the Judaeo-Christian defeated at Jerusalem has conquered the Empire In such a phrase his suppressed anxiety peeps out) For his style R Pichon *Les dern éq v prof* (1906) 251

17 Raby i 99 and Manitius *C L P* 325

18 Translations based on O M Dalton *Letters of S* (1915)

19 Dalton i p cxxxiii Baret ed of Sid (1878) 99 115

S s successors as letter writers in Gaul (Ruricius of Limoges and Avitus of Vienne) share his style Claudian speaks of Gaul with its learned citizens *Cons Hon* 582 and Jerome speaks of the high level of educ in Gaul (*Ep* cxxv 6) but his correspondent Rusticius was sent from Gaul to Rome that *gravitas* might weight the richness and glitter of Gallic diction

20 J B Bury *H st of Later R E* (1923) i 65 The Church now had seven grades bishops priests deacons subdeacons acolytes exorcists readers Its divisions closely corresponded to imperial divisions each city had a bishop and each province a metropolitan and so on In many ways the bishops thus now rep what remains of the urban forces

21 C H Turner *C M H* i 152

22 J S Reid *C M H* i 49

23 Dill 218 224 126 A large portion of the estates were tilled by slaves Priests lent money Sid iv 24 (In the second century S Callistus was a money lender and accord ng to Bishop Hippolytus an embezzler *The Refut of All Heres es* ix 7)

24 Dill 214 The pulpit was now the only place of mass oratory Control of education is passing to Church G Kaufmann in Raumer *Hist Taschenb ch* ser iv (x 1869) 54 *ff*

25 L Schmidt *Gesch d deut Stamme* (1910) 279 403 for Visigoths treating Gallo-Romans almost with equal status before the law Burgundians gave equality

26 E g S is interested in verses that read backwards

27 Sid, *Epist*, iv 2 and 3 Dill 184 Engelbrecht, *Corp Script Eccles Lat*

28 E W Meyer, *Gött Nachr* (1906), "Die rhythm Jamben d A" and Raby, i 87 (with his *Christ Lat Poetry*, 82)

As for Italy, the rest of the fifth cent was rather barren following Ambrose came Sedulius (already dealt with) and Severus Endelechius, who wrote eclogue in asclepiads, and Honorius Scholasticus (*Contra Epistolas Senecae* in elegiacs).

29 Couchoud *Book of Rev* (1932) 15, J Carcopino, *Virgile et le mystère de la IVe eglogue* (1930), 37 *ff*, F. Cumont, *Les Rels orientales* (2nd ed, 1930) 128

30 J Lindsay, *Marc Antony* (1936) Ch. xxii, and W W Tarn as given in refs there

31 Gilbert Murray, *Five Stages of Gr Rel*, Ch. v, cf Minucius Felix, *Oct* (Ouzel, 96)

For the early Christian hymn on Last Day (in marching trochaics almost accentual) see Walpole, 381, attrib to Hilary, known to Bede and the germ of *Dies Irae* Hell and horrors of Last Day more pop in West than East. note the terrible last ch of Tertullian, *De Spectaculis* (In East Gospel of Nicodemus and Hymn by Synezius)

32 The Stoic concept of a periodic absorption and renewal of total frame of things has very different elements "There is no Great Day in the world of Poseidonius," F C. Burkitt *Jewish and Christian Apocs* (1914) 31 *ff*

33 F A Wright, *Fathers of the Church* (1928) 124 *f*

34 Jerome *Ep*, cxxvii 12 'the city that took the world is taken" Cf his *Ep*, cxxvi, for the effect on Christians, and cxxviii for Christians fugitive everywhere Yet he insists, "The Roman Empire must be destroyed because its rulers deem it eternal"

35 Zosimus attrib Empire's decay to Constantine's neglect to hold the Secular Games A senator complained to Pope Gelasius (fifth cent.) about the effects of abolishing the Lupercalia (fertility-cult) and the Pope replied that it was sin which had brought misfortune on Rome Our morals thefts, murders adulteries, injustices iniquities ambitions greeds perjuries false testimonies oppression of the unfortunate our unprecedented perversity in all things (*Adv Andromachum*, Migne cix)

36 *De Gub Dei*, *v 25 iv 21, vii 91 v 18, 30, and 35, and 51 6* Dill 138, Hodgkin (*Italy and Her Invaders*) i 504 (2nd ed) Translation of S by E. V Sanford (*Records of Civ*, Columbia Univ)

37 *Praef*, iv, Dill, 68 O argues the locusts now eat less and Etna erupts less H F Stewart, *C.M H*, i. 576 *f*

38 Lot, 184.

39 Aug, *Ep*, cxxxvi and cxxxviii, Seeck, *Symm* clxxix Jerome, *Ep* cvii

40 E Barker (in *City of God* trans. Healey, 1931) p xvi

41 There are very old roots of the idea in Egypt Babylonia Palestine in the concepts and utopian experiments of the Greek Stoics in S Paul etc

42. "Two loves have created two cities," xiv. 28. Cf. *Ep.*, cxxxvii, *C.D.*, xix. 17.

43. xix. 15. Augustine was a bishop dispensing justice on his tribunal in all sorts of cases. He justifies slavery on the same basis as property. (Note he was highly trained in rhetoric and dialectic—which training underlies the subtle paradoxes of his balancings, his bringing-together and separating the two cities. In A. we see incomparably the highest tension between Christian attitudes and rhetoric.) Aristotle (*Politics*, ii. 5) rejected the idea that property was the basis of evil; evil, he said, was rooted in human nature. Seneca believed in the "essential corruption of human nature" Note the subtlety of Aug 's dialectic next to these pagan thinkers' formulations.

44. Moore, *Studies in Dante*, i.

45. Carlyle, *Med. Polit. Theory in the West*, ii. 2. 6.

46. Gazelee, *Anthology of Med. Latin* (1925), 25. Bede's actual computations are close to those still on the Bible margins following Bishop Usher: R. W. Chambers, *Man's Unconquerable Mind* (1939).

Cf. in general. "'Enoch's' world was not an end in itself. 'Enoch' tells us of the World to show us that everything in it is prepared for the inevitable judgment. . . . The sentence from the Fourth Book of Ezra, which says directly and in so many words, 'The Most High hath made not one world, but two. . . .' All those who cling to the belief that history is not altogether meaningless and that it marches, however slowly and haltingly, to a definite goal, ought to regard the ideas enshrined in books like 'Enoch' with sympathy." Burkitt, *op. cit.*

For the way the Jews took from Zoroastrianism the idea of the Son of Man M.-J. Lagrange, *Le Messianisme chez les Juifs* (1909), 96; A. von Gall, βασιλεία του θεου (1926) Index, s. v. Saosyant, Menschensohn, E. Meyer, *Ursprung u. Anfänge d. Chr*, ii (1921), 68, and i (1921), 60 From Persia came the ideas of the Saviour's Pre-existence, Virgin Birth, Ascension to Heaven, Last Judgment.

47. Those cited are· *De Trin* , iii 16; *Gen* , v. 44–5 and vi 2 and vii. 34–6.

48. 2 *Dist* , xviii See P. M Northcote, *The Idea of Development* (1910), 31. Vincent (xxiii, *Commonit*) asks if there is progress in Christ, and answers yes. "Growth of the body of the Church's doctrine is to resemble the growth of the human body, ever one and the same, though the flower of youth differs from the maturity of age. For if the regular course of nature be not developed by each creature acc. to its own species, then deformity must ensure "

Chapter 5

1. Roger, 56, 82. See also F. Labroue (about Perigueux) in *Atti del cong internaz di scienze storiche* (1905), ii, 161 *ff*

2. Circus was held at Arles as late as 461: Fauriel, *Hist de la Gaule rom* , i. 394, Chaix, i 135

3 Orientius wrote a moralising *Commonitorium* in elegiacs Raby says he knew *De Prov Div* and faces up to the same problems without mechanical rhetoric He knew and borrowed from Vergil, Ovid, Horace, Martial, Lucan Juvenal, and *Dist Catonis* (Manitius *C L P*, 199) .

4 *Raby i Ch 2 for the exs I use Victor was so emphatic on Free Will he* was accused of Pelagianism "In the *Precatio* even good is attrib. to the Fall," Duckett, 61

5 I make some use of the translation by H G Evelyn White in the Loeb *Ausonius*, ii See also Un nouveau poème de P de P," P Courcelle *Vigiliae Christ* (1947) i nr 2

6 Glover, Ch xii S S is strongly apocalyptic He writes to a deacon depicting himself in his little cell alone with the thought that so often grips his mind "the hope of things to come and disgust of the present fear of judgment and terror of punishment, and what follows these thoughts and is their cause, the recollection of my sins, made me sad and weary,' But he writes fine Latin (Gibbon and Boissier agree) and has a mild literary vanity A character *in his Dialogue describes the terrific success of the Life of Martin in* Rome Carthage, Egypt, and brings a request from the desert for a sequel

7 Jerome, *Ep*, xxii 28 and 24 he distrusts even priests too and bids the girl plead a 'necessity of the bowels or the bladder' if she is left alone with one Cassianus *Coll*, xviii 7, Bened, Migne, lxvi Isid, *De eccl officiis*, ii 16 See Appuleius, *Met*, for the pagan prototype the wander-devotees of the Great Mother also Catullus *Attis*; Plato on the Orphics and the many refs to Cynic missionaries Eremitic individuals and groups were common in Egypt and the Near East, and also in the Balkans, long before Christianity Indeed, in such groups as the Kouretes we trace them to the pre-Greek Aegean etc.

Chapter 6

1 Bouchier, 42 *f*

2 P L. Couchoud 29

3 J M. Clark *Abbey of S Gall* (1926) 96 and 249 Greg Tours (*Hist Fr*, x 30) takes M C as regular handbook of his day

4 Paul Monceaux, *Les Africains* (1894) 453

5 Dill 413

6 Raby, i 105 Hodgkin ii 243

7 P did a transl from Greek of *Periegesis* of Dionysius As an ex of his panegyrical verse That I may briefly utter the depths of my heart, He had everything the ancients praised in a man.'

8 D's diction and prosody show medieval elements Schanz iv 2 68 He generally keeps cesura but at times quantit. metre yields to rhythmical needs *Quia* tends to replace accusative with infinitive *He knows Vergil Ovid Statius* Claudian well A poor poem, *Orestis Tragedia*, is attrib For comparison of his creation poem and Milton Duckett 91

9 Verecundus Bishop of Junca was taken off to Byzantium with Pope Vigilus the African Bishops had opposed Justinian in the matter of the Three Chapters (Raby C L P 99) V wrote a poem *De Satisfacti ne Poen tenti e*

10 Hexs with elegiac preludes Cesura careless He doesn t mind altering quantities to suit needs knows Vergil Lucan Claudian.

11 E Buonaiuti *Il Crist nell Africana r m* (1928) 165 Bury *Later R.E* ii 316

12 Sid App, *Ep* vii 27 3 and 4 *Petits Bollandistes* vii 59 60

13 Greg Tours viii I Syrians near Paris *Syria* (1934) xv 210 H Pirenne La Fin du commerce des Syriens *Mélanges Bidez* 677 *ff*

14 *Life of S Caesar*, i 19 (*S S Rer Merov*, iii 462) P Charlesworth *Trade routes* (2nd ed) 170 202 etc

15 Pirenne *M hammed and Charlemagne* 81

16 Greg Tours vi 17 In Spain after persecutions they were declared the slaves of Christians

16a Letter lxiii to Archbishop Cuthbert warning him to stop nuns and other women from pilgrimages

17 VI 6 Egypt had paper monopoly Pirenne *Comptes rend s des S de L acad des Inscr et belles lettres* (1928) 178 *ff*

18 Greg Tours viii 15 *Forsch u Forschritte* (1935) xi For the prolonged eastern hold J Gay *Papes grecs et Syriens* (in *Mél Schlumberger*, i 40 *ff*)

19 Even Aesop was a Phrygian In general E. Bevan *Sibyls and Seers* (1928) and R Reitzenstein *Hellenist Wundererzahl ngen* (1906)

20 E A Babut *S Martin de Tours* 94 108

21 Toutain *Rev d hist des Rel* (January 1912)

22 For early Christian romances Glover Ch xv

23 J L Heiberg *Nat wiss u Math im Klass alt* (1912) 82

24 G Bigourdan *L Astron évolution des idées et des methodes* (1911) 295 In geog work P solved problem of projection of spherical surface on plane There were many other Greek Oriental mathematicians about this time—Menelaus (on spheres) Nicomachus a Syrian whose *Intro to Arith* was transl by Boethius Theon of Smyrna Pappus whose problem on geom loci was starting point of Descartes s researches in analytical geometry Severus of Egypt (on cone cylinder and transversals) Diophantes whose important new approaches were rediscovered by Regiomontanus in 1460 Eutocius of Ascalon Theon of Alexandria etc

25 A Reymond *Hist of Sc ence in G R Ant* (1927) 101 *f*
Themison of Laodicea had developed the methodic school with its emphasis on the general organic state of the body

26 A P Rossiter *Growth of Science* (1939) Ch iii

27 Raby i 13

28 Bréhier *L art en France des invas ons barbares* 17–26 Rostovtzeff *Irania and Greeks* (192) 185 *f*

29 J Strzygowski, *Origins of Christian Church Art* (1923) 162 *f*

30 Bréhier 67

31 *Forsch ng u Fort chr tte* (1935), xi c. 123 for three divisions—Gothic till 500 Vis gothic till 600 then Byzantine

32 Bréhier 38

33 Bréhier 28 Irano-Gothic art making way in Gaul from mid sixth cent. Dawson, *Mak ng of Europe* 97

34 H Picton, *Early German Art and its Or g ns* (1939).

35 E Babelon *Mém de la Soc d s Antiq de F* (8th s vi 1924) 112 L. Schmidt (*G d der t Stamme D Ostgermanen* 2nd ed. 1934) cons ders the *ars b rbarica* of the period the work of Gallo-Roman slaves done in German-Oriental style.

36 N Aberg *A S in England during Early Cents* (1926) 7 *f*

37 Greg Tours vii 36

38 Brehier 107–9 Sidonius (Dalton) ii 225 Hodgkin compares with some of Ravenna mosaics Sid. (*c rm na* xii) lists pictures in a mans on which include episodes from history (Siege of Cyzicus) myth (Hercules and snakes) and Jewish history He refers to encaustic painting, also to basilica s gilded ceiling (T G Jackson *Byz and Romanesque Arch t* 1933 ii 31).

39 *Registrum* ix. 208

40 They may have come from Near East: O von Falke *Kunstgesch d Seiden extilien* (1913).

41 Bréhier 69

42 E Kitzinger *Ea ly Med Art* (B M 1940) 12 and 16

Chapter 7

1 Pirenne, *M and C.* 127 *f* Paulinus *Ep* v 6

2 Roger 175 For the lack of hostility Horle *Fruhm ttelalt Monschs und Klerikerb ldung in Ital en* (1914), 48

3 Grisar *H st of Rome* ii 245

4 Theodoric had been angered by persecution of Arians in the East and was jealous of connections with Byzantium. He had set out to encourage the l beral arts and used Cass odorus for the purpose B s execution was not rel g ous (W Bark, *Speculum* (1946) 312–7)

5 I do not mean he was anti Christian. things have moved far from the Claudian attitudes. See G Paris *J des Savants* (1884) 576

6 Geyer in Ueberweg Geyer *Grundwiss der Gesch der Philosophie* 1928 ii 135 *ff* Also Manitius *Gesch. d latein Lit* i. 2 *ff*

7 Roger 190

8 The supreme essay of one who throughout his life had found the highest solace in the dry light of reason Stewart and Rand (Loeb ed of *C of P*) x

9. Of the many imitations translations commentaries the most interesting was the version into A.S by Alfred

10 Raby 1 126 Ennodius (ed Hartel) 615 A Dubois *La Latinité d E* (1903).

11 Roger 188 Greg of Tours says G had learned rhetoric and dialectic but was against the study of the classics (The quotation (given by Raby) is from the end of his twenty-one homilies on Ezekiel) In a letter to Desiderius Bishop of Vienne Gregory wrote (vi 54) We received information that we cannot contemplate without a blush that you are teaching grammar to your people This news we heard with such sorrow and vehement repugnance that what I wrote you before I now retract with sadness for praise of Christ cannot be in the same mouth as praise of Jupiter Consider what a crime it is for bishops to sing what even laymen may not. And though our beloved son the priest Candidus denied this in reply to our questions and made excuses for you we still think it horrible for a priest to do this He hopes D is not guilty of trifles and profane letters blasphemous sports of the wicked. And he adds he is sending monks to check up (Mgr Mann *Lives of the Popes in Early M. Ages* 190. argues G condemns only pagan lit John of Salisbury *Poly crat cus* 11 26 says G forbade maths and had the classics burned)

Chapter 8

1 Only l t. name is that of Archb Martin of Bracara a Pannonian (d 580) of whom we have three minor inscriptions Manitius *C L P* 409

2 Roger 195–200 *Synon* 11 65 *Diff* 11 39 *Sent* 111 13

3 Roger 200

4 H Waddell *Wandering Scholars* 29 But the old S England routes were blocked O G S Crawford *Antiquity* (1945) 111 and *Custom is King*

5 Raby *C L P* 14 Ovid *Ars Am* 1 59 Claudian has rhymes in his fescennine verses The poem of Modestinus I translated above (P L M iv 429 A L. 273) has seven lines ending *emus amus*

6 Polheim *De Lat Reimprosa* (1928) 312 *ff*

7 W B Sedgwick *Rev Benedict* (October 1924) 339

8 Polheim 243

9 Polheim says Irish took over rhyme and rhythm from East and developed knew rhymes not only in hymns but in rhet. prose of religious writers and in prefaces of mass-books 312 *ff* There are rich double rhymes in the Antiphonary of Bangor and the Book of Cerne The complex interrelations are shown by fact that Ninnian disciple of S Martin of Tours introduced Celtic monasticism into Britain. See The travels of the Celtic Sts E G Bowen *Antiquity* (1944) 16 *ff* H Williams *Christianity in Early Brit* (1912) 354

10 F J H Jenkinson *Hisp Famina* (1908) E. K Rand, in *Stud zur latein Dichtung des Mittelalters, Ehrengabe f K. Strecker* (1931) 137. Polheim 286 Raby, 1 167. Gazelee, *Transition*, 9 Is the *H.F* line a hopelessly broken-down hexameter?

11 Jenkinson, p xviii

12 V wrote fifteen epitomae and eight letters. Abbo of Fleury (d. 1004) sets him at Toulouse, but he himself says, 'I will enunciate in the Bigorre tongue" Aldhelm and Bede knew his work. Roger, 111, and Raby, 1 154

13 The idea of an esoteric style was old (Heracleitos, Pythagoras, etc.) see Margoliouth s ed of Aristotle's *Poetics*

14 Roger, 120 Raby, 1 155-7 P Lejay, *Rev de Philol*, xix (1895) 45 *ff* W Meyer, *Rythmik* (1905) 1 199 *ff* D Tardi, *Les Epitomae de V de T* (1928).

15 Fl. Mallius Theodorus in *De Metris* (Keil *Gramm Lat*, v 586) attacked rhythmic verse, about 400

16 The exs astonishingly anticipate all sorts of medieval jingles
Lupus a Christian, writes "*veritas vera aequitas aequa* " Plastus highly praised, writes doggerel in med. dog Latin. *limo solubili, lympha meabili, igne ardibili, aura mutabili, mundus visibilis, surgitus initiis, cuius terribilis pendet tristities* "

17 Having eye-trouble as a student, he rubbed his eyes with oil from a lamp before an image of S Martin.

18 Raby, 1 133. Greg Tours *H.F*, v 45 Roger, 101 For survival of schools Pirenne *Rev Bénédict*, xlvi (1934) 165 Other poets in Gaul whom F knew, were Dynamius of Marseilles (app the author of the Life of S Maximus) Jovinus, Bertechramn (praised for epigrams—though F admits the verses often have a syllable too many). E. K. Rand, 'The Brighter aspects of Merov Age," *Proc Class Assn* (1922), xviii 165 *ff*

19 Dill, *Rom Soc in Merov Gaul*, 374.

B's first husband was murdered by poisoned knives by (later Queen) Fredegond. Gregory is pleasant about B., since she was a great lady but admits she was suspected of murder and her second marriage was incestuous (The continuation of his work Fredegar's *Chronicle* shows she did not blink at murder, etc. in her lust for power and gold.) Gregory the Great commends her for her "religious spirit and zealously pious mind *Ep* vi. 50

Other exs. of behaviour under the Franks. Count Eulalius rebuked by his mother, strangled her with her own hair shirt, killed his wife's lover carried off a nun whom one of his concubines murdered. Duke Amalo carried girl torn-bleeding to bed and she stabbed him as he lay drunk. One of King Theuderic s cousins eloped with a slave her mother sent men to kill the slave, the girl put poison in her mother s communion-cup, and was killed in a bath of boiling water and so on.

Note also how the Gallo-Romans now assumed the militarised manners of the Franks and bore arms. "The asserted 'Frank Cemeteries' are in fact, for the most part, Gallo-Roman cemeteries," Lot, *Les Invas Germ* (1935), 210.

20 Preserved in the Church's liturgy. *Pange* for Good Friday; *Vexilla* for Passion Sunday.

21. *Pange* identifies the Cross with the Tree of Life in Eden, and glorifies the "Faithful Cross, *the one and only* Noble Tree *among the whole of earthly* trees"

22. But he adds, "for the first time": which sadly undervalues the whole vast movement of transformation going on ever since Fronto and Commodianus.

23 Raby, I. 141. F. was read as a classic till the latter part of the eleventh cent., when he was almost forgotten (save for the hymns) till his poems were printed in later sixteenth cent.

Chapter 9

1. P. Vinogradoff, *Growth of Manor* (2nd ed., 1911), 74.

2. Salvioli, *Sulla Distrib. della prop fond.*, III 533 *ff*

3. Vinogradoff, 113.

4. Vinogradoff, 86· "The organising absolutism of the landlord is a fiction, dangerous in the sense that it blinds the observer to the powerful counter-influences of tribal habits, of the great variety and frequent incompleteness in the application and the exploitation of labour to the soil, of the growth of half-dependent culture on a small scale"

Thus, Rescripts of Commodus at Souk el Khmis and Gasr-Mezuar show extension of customary rights on large tracts in Africa for the *coloni*, and the successful vindication of usages against Imperial Stewards C I L. VIII 10 570, VIII, Suppl 14 428 Villagers of the Cyllanean estates in Phrygia formed associations for the worship of Zeus Sabazios which would clearly provide a basis for group-expression (Ramsay, *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, I 283)—rescripts of Philippus for Araguene in Phrygia and of Cordianus for Scaptaparene in Thrace reveal the readiness of the peasants to take a group-stand against abuses (the latter threaten a mass-exodus)

Altogether, private contract tended to fall away to the advantage of customary rights individual claims were merged in communal claims We see this clearly defined in Africa—a change from contracts between landlord and single tenant to a system of holdings based on general settlement and custom

5. E. Meyer, *Ursprung*, III (1923), 335

6 O. Seeck, *Gesch' d Untergangs d Ant Welt*, III (1921), 138, H Bergson, *Les Deux Sources* (1932), 58 Meyer, *Ursprung*, II 118 *f*, speaks of the "double-edged ambiguity of the new development" in Judaism which is a more cautious approach Cf E Kornemann, for fall from the "high point of exact science," the third century B C —"from philosophy . . to theology, from astronomy to astrology"—"a revulsion from civilisation and a deep yearning to win release from earthly misery," *Röm Gesch* (III, 2 of Gercke-Norden, *Einleitung in die Alt. wiss*, 1933), 93 But life was miserable, the revulsion was the only way to let in the transforming factors, to which religion gave emotional utterance The enormous new integrative potentialities are what these historians quite miss.